

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA : A STUDY

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MEHARCHAND LACHHMANDAS

Oriental Booksellers & Publishers

2736, DARYAGANJ, NEW DELHI - 110 002

Sales : Street No. 1, 1 Ansari Road, Daryaganj,
New Delhi - 110 002 (India)

January, 1977

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PRINTED AT SHRI BHARAT BHARATI PVT. LTD., ANSARI ROAD,
NEW DELHI AND PUBLISHED BY KHAZANCHI RAM JAIN,
MEHARCHAND LACHHMANDAS, DARYAGANJ, NEW DELHI

First published in 1955

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA : A STUDY



TO MY TEACHER
Dr. V. G. PARANJPE,
AN IDEAL KALYĀṆAMITRA.



PREFACE

This work was first published in 1955. I am grateful to the world of scholars for the kind reception they gave to it. There has been a constant demand for this book which had been out of print for a long time. I am very grateful to the Proprietors of Messrs Meharchand Lachhmandas, New Delhi, who came forward to bring out the second edition of the work. I am also grateful to Dr. (Mrs.) Nalini M. Chapekar for correcting the proofs, preparing the index and attending to all problems connected with this book while it went through the press. The Proprietors of Messrs Meharchand Lachhmandas deserve my best thanks for their uniform courtesy, kindness and for their keen interest in my work.

Bombay.
13th January, 1977

T. G. MAINKAR

INTRODUCTION

TO THE FIRST EDITION

With the work of Dr. Atreya in the field, an attempt to write about the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha or the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa might be considered by some as almost uncalled for. Very valuable contributions have also been made to the study of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa by scholars of great repute : Dr. Raghavan, Prof. Shivaprasada Bhattacharya, Mr. P. C. Divanji and Dr. S. N. Dasgupta. To all these great scholars very great debt is due and it is most respectfully acknowledged with a deep sense of gratitude.

Dr. Atreya's work was published in 1936 and since then much valuable contribution has been made to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa studies. But all these views and reviews have appeared mostly in the form of papers or articles in Journals and therefore are in a scattered condition. A student of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa should have all this material presented to him in one place. A work of the importance of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, with so much being written about it, certainly needs a review after at least 17 years since the first book on it appeared.

Dr. Atreya's work primarily deals with the philosophy of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and is in the main comparative in outlook and treatment. It is intended here to study the work as an Epic of the Vedānta. The very chapters are so arranged as to develop the argument desired. Viewed in this aspect, it will be seen that here not only a survey or enmassing of the available material has been done but wherever possible, additions have been made and some different conclusions have been arrived at.

I have to thank Dr. V. Raghavan for his very generous help. Dr. R.N. Dandekar, my Guru, has been everything to me all these days and it is his very kind interest and love that has been an encouragement and an inspiration to me. I am indebted to him for many valuable suggestions. I have also to thank Prof. P. B. Sathaye for many useful suggestions and for kindly correcting the proofs. I have to thank my friends Prof. A. K. Bhagavat and Prof. W. S. Sangavkar for their very valuable suggestions and constant help. I am deeply indebted to these friends of mine and to them my best thanks are due.

The Managers of the Prabha Press, Sangli deserve thanks for their uniform courtesy and kindness.

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The Mahābhārata.
The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in two volumes. (N. S. edn.)
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The Works of Śaṁkara. (Vāṇī Vilāsa edn.)
The Works of Classical Writers referred to in the work.

ABBREVIATIONS

The Bhagavadgītā	BG.
The Brahmasūtras of Bādarāyaṇa	BS.
The Laghu-Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha	LYV.
The Mahābhārata	Mbh.
The Ṛgveda Saṁhitā	ṚV.
The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa/Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha	V.R./YV.
The Rāmāyaṇa	
North-Western Indian recension	N.W.
Nirṇayasāgara edn.	'C'

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CHAPTER I

THE YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA AND THE RĀMĀYAṆA

The Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha is known also as the Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa, Ārṣa-Rāmāyaṇa and Vāsiṣṭha-Rāmāyaṇa. It is indeed very difficult to see the real and precise significance of these alternative titles of the great work. It may be that if Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa was known simply as the Rāmāyaṇa, the present great work on account of its very important philosophical teachings came to be called by its admirers as the Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa, *mahā* denoting the importance of its teachings. In point of bulk and volume also the present work is considerably bigger than the Epic Rāmāyaṇa and for this reason also it might have received the title *mahā*. Thirdly, in point of its highly ornate style and poetical excellences also it has a very important place and this striking excellence might have very deservedly earned for it the title *mahā*. The title *ārṣa* might indicate its antiquity; for indeed the claim is that the work is by Vālmīki, the author of the Epic. As the story goes, King Ariṣṭanemi full of ascetic fervour (*vairāgya*) approaches Vālmīki with a request for the knowledge that secures salvation and the latter then narrates to him the Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-*saṁvāda*. It is difficult to say which of the two Rāmāyaṇas Vālmīki composed first in case he is the author of both the works as the orthodox tradition asserts. The phrase *rāmāyaṇam akhaṇḍitam* in *śṛṅṇu rājan pravakṣyāmi rāmāyaṇam akhaṇḍitam* (I. 1.52) offers no clue and the commentator is certainly not very convincing when he connects the two Rāmāyaṇas. There are however other indications which clearly reveal a later date for the Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa. The problem of Vālmīki's authorship of the YV. is a vexed one. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa appears to be the appropriate title as the work is nothing but the conversation between Vasiṣṭha and Rāma and the philosophical instruction given by the former to the latter. Yet the work has been so written as to indicate that though Vasiṣṭha is the teacher, Vālmīki is the poet. To the Ikṣvākus, Vasiṣṭha has been the constant teacher and it is quite natural that he should be playing the same role here.

The Epics and the Purāṇas contain numerous tales when Vasiṣṭha gave philosophical guidance to the Ikṣvākus and in the Raghuvamśa (VIII. 75-91) too it is he who consoles Aja grieved over the sudden death of Indumatī. It is in the fitness of things, therefore, that when Prince Rāma is in doubt, Vasiṣṭha should have come forward to remove it. Vālmīki and the Rāmāyaṇa go together; in fact the two are synonyms and so a Rāmāyaṇa must be by Vālmīki and by none else. It is in some such way that the two names have come together—rather have been brought together.

Throughout, the appearance is kept up that Vālmīki is the author. King Ariṣṭanemi (I.1) inquires of Vālmīki about the knowledge that secures salvation and in reply Vālmīki narrates the Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-*saṁvāda*. In the last *sarga* of the work (VI. 216), it is Vālmīki who concludes. In fact, however, this Vālmīki-Ariṣṭanemi dialogue is an inset in the Agniveśya Sūtīkṣṇa Kāruṇya dialogue. Almost uniformly at the end of each and every canto the colophon is *iti arṣe śrīvāsiṣṭharāmāyaṇe vālmīkiye prakaraṇe sargaḥ*. As has been observed already, it is very difficult to say which of these two Rāmāyaṇas Vālmīki composed first in case he was the author of both of them.

The Epic Rāmāyaṇa is absolutely silent about and ignorant of the existence of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. In the Uttara Kāṇḍa (111.11), it is said that the son of Prāchetas composed the Rāmāyaṇa—*sabhaviṣyam sahottaram*—which is explained by the commentator as the “Rāmāyaṇa along with the account of Ayodhyā after Rāma’s departure and also with the Uttara Kāṇḍa.” There is no reference to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa either in the text or in the commentary. According to the view now generally accepted,¹ the Uttara Kāṇḍa is a later addition and indeed in the Yuddha Kāṇḍa (128. 105-120) is a conclusion in itself by the poet of the Epic. It is here said that Vālmīki composed the Rāmāyaṇa but there is no reference to any other work by Vālmīki. Not only this but there is no reference to the very central situation itself, taking advantage of which the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has been composed. In the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa, Viśvāmitra comes to the court of King Daśaratha to request him for help in the performance of the sacrifices undertaken by him by sending Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with him as protectors against the Rākṣasas. It is Daśaratha who

1. Winternitz, History of Sanskrit Literature, Vol. I, pp. 493-6.

hesitates out of affection and Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa go with Viśvāmitra only too willingly. Viśvāmitra is in a hurry and so also the Rāmāyaṇa narrative in a hurry proceeds rapidly in the true epic style. There is not the slightest indication that Rāma is dejected and not in mood to fight or that he had been to a *tīrthayātrā* (*sargas* 21-22 of the Bāla Kāṇḍa read as one continuous account). The case is otherwise with the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as it follows the Epic Rāmāyaṇa account so far as the arrival of Viśvāmitra to the court of Daśaratha, his proposal to the old king of taking Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa as his protectors and the hesitation of Daśaratha are concerned (*Vairāgya*, I. 7, 8, 9). But before the arrival of Viśvāmitra, Rāma has completed his *tīrthayātrā* and is full of *vairāgya*. After some natural hesitation Daśaratha is willing to part with his sons and sends the *pratihāri* who returns not with Rāma but with the news of his mood. It is at this stage that Viśvāmitra has Rāma brought in the assembly and he requests Vasiṣṭha to remove the gloom of Rāma by proper instruction. This proper instruction that follows is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Rama's asceticism—*vairāgya*—is clearly an after-thought of some one. It is clear that the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa does not know the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa on the other hand knows the entire Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa; freely draws upon it and at times enlarges and embellishes its plain account. There cannot be any reasonable doubt about the later character of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as compared with the Epic. As has been pointed out the phrase *rāmāyaṇam akhaṇḍitam* does not mean anything and does not establish any relation by way of continuity etc. with the Epic Rāmāyaṇa. Chronologically the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is narrating an earlier incident in Rāma's career and yet the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa knows the important incidents in the Epic, especially Rāma's separation from Sītā since he gives in *Vairāgya* I.57-66, the reasons for Viṣṇu's (Rāma's) sufferings from this calamity. Similarly in II.20, 21, 26, 27, 28 are mentioned all the characters from the Epic.

मह्यं च म गवन्ब्रूहि कथं संसारसंकटे ।

रामो व्यवहृतो ह्यस्मिन्भरतश्च महामनाः ॥20॥

शत्रुघ्नो लक्ष्मणश्चापि सीता चापि यशस्विनी ।

रामानुयायिनस्ते वा मन्त्रिपुत्रा महाधियः ॥21॥

लक्ष्मणो भरतश्चैव शत्रुघ्नश्च महामनाः ।
 कौसल्या च सुमित्रा च सीता दशरथस्तथा ॥26॥
 कृतास्त्रश्चाऽविरोधश्च बोधपारमुपागताः ।
 वसिष्ठो वामदेवश्च मन्त्रिणोऽष्टौ तथेतरे ॥27॥
 दृष्टिर्जयन्तो भासश्च सत्यो विजय एव च ।
 विभीषणः सुषेणश्च हनुमानिन्द्रजित्तथा ॥28॥

Similarly in Nirvāṇa (a. 22.21-25) occurs a very clear and definite reference to the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa.

पुनस्तानेव तानेवमन्यानपि युगे युगे ।
 वेदादिवित्प्ररचितानितिहासान्स्मराम्यहम् ॥21॥
 इतिहासं महाश्रयमन्यं रामायणाभिधम् ।
 ग्रन्थलक्षप्रमाणं च ज्ञानशास्त्रं स्मराम्यहम् ॥22॥
 रामवद्वयवहर्तव्यं न रावणविलासवत् ।
 इति यत्र धियां ज्ञानं हस्ते फलमिवापितम् ॥23॥
 कृतं वाल्मीकिना चैतदधुना यत्करिष्यति ।
 अन्यच्च प्रकटं लोके स्थितं ज्ञास्यसि कालतः ॥24॥
 वाल्मीकिनाम्ना जीवेन तेनैवान्येन वा कृतम् ।
 एतच्च द्वादशं वारं क्रियते विस्मृतिं गतम् ॥25॥

The commentator in 24.25 finds a reference to the Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa by Vālmīki and its twelfth redaction.

Again Rāma is identified with Viṣṇu in the Bāla- and the Uttara Kāṇḍas of the Rāmāyaṇa and it is for this very reason that these books have been held to be later.¹ The Mahā or Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa also depicts Rāma as Viṣṇu and therefore must be later than these later books of the Rāmāyaṇa. It is very significant that the Uttara Kāṇḍa which accepts the identification of Rāma and Viṣṇu feels called upon to explain as to why even Viṣṇu should have been required to suffer like an ordinary mortal and mentions the curse of Bhṛgu as the reason. In a war between the gods and the *asuras*, the wife of Bhṛgu gave protection to the *asuras* and so Viṣṇu killed her. Upon this, Bhṛgu cursed Viṣṇu that he would be born as a human being and would suffer from a separation from his wife (Uttara

1. Winternitz, History of Sanskrit Literature, Vol. I, p. 496

Kāṇḍa, 51. 11. 18). The Bāla Kāṇḍa gives a simpler reason—Rāvaṇa with the *asuras* under him harassed the gods and therefore the gods wanted to get rid of him and in response to their request Viṣṇu has to come down as Rāma to kill Rāvaṇa—an explanation which well fits in with the *avatāra* theory. Thus according to the Epic-narrative, we have only two reasons mentioned on account of which Viṣṇu came to this world as Rāma. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa on the other hand mentions other additional reasons and thus shows its acquaintance with a rather fully developed mythological and Purāṇic accounts. Vairāgya, 1.57-66, mentions the various reasons : curse by Sanatkumāra, curse of Bhṛgu, curse of Vṛndā and the curse from Devadatta.

सनत्कुमारो निष्काम अवसद्ब्रह्मसयनि ।
 वैकुण्ठादागतो विष्णुस्त्रैलोक्याधिपतिः प्रभुः ॥57॥
 ब्रह्मणा पूजितस्तत्र सत्यलोकनिवासिभिः ।
 विना कुमारं तं दृष्ट्वा ह्युवाच प्रभुरीश्वरः ॥58॥
 सनत्कुमार स्तब्धोऽसि निष्कामो गवंचेष्टया ।
 अतस्त्वं भव कामार्तः शरजन्मेति नामतः ॥59॥
 तेनापि शापितो विष्णुः सर्वज्ञत्वं तवास्ति यत् ।
 किञ्चित्कालं हि तत्त्यक्त्वा त्वमज्ञानी भविष्यसि ॥60॥
 भृगुभार्या हतां दृष्ट्वा ह्युवाच क्रोधमूर्च्छितः ।
 विष्णो तवापि भार्याया वियोगो हि भविष्यति ॥61॥
 वृन्दया शापितो विष्णुश्छलनं यत्त्वया कृतम् ।
 अतस्त्वं स्त्रीवियोगं तु वचनात्मम यास्यसि ॥62॥
 भार्या हि देवदत्तस्य पयोष्णीतीरसंस्थिता ।
 नृसिंहवेषधृग्विष्णुं दृष्ट्वा पञ्चत्वमागता ॥63॥
 तेन शप्तो हि नृहरिर्दुःखार्तः स्त्रीवियोगतः ।
 तवापि भार्याया सार्धं वियोगो हि भविष्यति ॥64॥
 भृगुणैवं कुमारेण शापितो देवशर्मणा ।
 वृन्दया शापितो विष्णुस्तेन मानुष्यतां गतः ॥65॥

All this very clearly reveals the full development of the *avatāra* theory in general and of Viṣṇu mythology in particular.

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa freely draws upon the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa. *Sargas* 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 of the Vairāgya Prakaraṇa lift verses verbatim from the corresponding portions of the Vālmīki

Rāmāyaṇa. The Epic has come down to us and is today presented in three recensions—the Bengal recension given in the edition by G. Gorresio, the North-Western Indian (Western Indian, Kashmiri) given in the edition by Pandit Ram Labhaya and the recension given in the Nirṇayasāgara edition, designated as 'C' by Jacobi and most widely spread in the North as well as in the South of India. Below is given the result of a check up of the corresponding portions of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the three recensions of the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa :

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

I. 6

विश्वामित्रो महातेजा अयोध्यामभ्यगात्पु-
रीम् । 6b
स राज्ञो दर्शनाकाङ्क्षी द्वाराध्यक्षानुवाच ह । 7a
शीघ्रमाख्यात मां प्राप्तं कौशिकं गाधिनः
सुतम् । 7b
संभ्रान्तमनसः सर्वे तेन वाक्येन चोदिताः । 8b
ते गत्वा राजसदनं विश्वामित्रमृषिं ततः । 9a
स दृष्ट्वा मालितं लक्ष्म्या भीतस्तमृषि-
सत्तमम् । 31a
प्रहृष्टवदनो राजा स्वयमर्घ्यं न्यवेदयत् । 31b
स राज्ञः प्रतिगृह्यार्घ्यं शास्त्रदृष्टेन कर्मणा ॥ 32a
कुशलं चाव्ययं चैव पर्यपृच्छन्नराधिपम् । 33b
ते सर्वे हृष्टमनसो महाराजनिवेशने । 35b
यथाऽमृतस्य संप्राप्तिर्यथा वर्षमवर्षके । 39b
यथेष्टदारसंपर्कात्पुत्रजन्माऽप्रजावतः । 40a
प्रणष्टस्य यथा लाभो भवदागमनं तथा । 41b
पूर्वं राजपिशब्देन तपसा द्योतितप्रभः ।
ब्रह्मर्षित्वमनुप्राप्तः पूज्योसि भगवन्मया ॥ 45
अद्य मे सफलं जन्म जीवितं तदमुजीवितम् । 50b

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I. 18

अभ्यागच्छन्महातेजा विश्वा-
मित्रो महामुनिः ।
... ॥ 39
... ॥ 40a
... ।
... तदा ॥ 41
स दृष्ट्वा ज्वलितं दीप्त्या
तापसं संशितव्रतम् । 43b
... ततोऽर्घ्यमुपहारयत् ।
... ॥ 44
... ॥ 45a
... तस्य राज्ञो निवेशनम् । 48b
... वर्षमनूदके । 50b
यथा सदृशदारेषु पुत्रजन्मा-
प्रजस्य वै ।
... यथा हर्षो महोदयः । 51
... ॥ 54b
... बहुधा मया ॥ 55a
... च सुजीवितम् । 53b

Note : Dots indicate identical lines and words. Words given in bold letters indicate the changes or replacements.

कर्ता चाहमशेषं ते दैवतं परमं भवान् । 54b
 इदमतिमधुरं निशम्य वाक्यं श्रुतिसुख-
 मात्मविदा विनीतमुक्तम् ।
 प्रथितगुणयशा गुणैर्विशिष्टं मुनिवृषभः
 परमं जगाम हर्षम् ॥ 55

... दैवतं हि भवान्मम । 58a
 इति हृदयसुखं ... ।
 ... परमऋषिः ... ॥ 59

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तच्छ्रुत्वा राजसिंहस्य वाक्यमदभुतविस्तरम् ।
 हृष्टरोमा महातेजा विश्वामित्रोऽभ्यभाषत ॥ 1
 सद्यः राजशार्दूल तवैवैतन्महीतले ।
 महावंशप्रसूतस्य वसिष्ठवशवर्तिनः ॥ 2
 यत्तु मे हृद्गतं वाक्यं तस्य कार्यविनिर्णयम् ।
 कुरु त्वं राजशार्दूल धर्मं समनुपालय ॥ 3
 अहं धर्मं समातिष्ठे सिद्धचर्यं पुरुषर्षभ । 4a
 अवधूते तथाभूते तस्मिन्पागकदम्बके ।
 कृतश्रमो निरुत्साहस्तमाद्देशादुपागतः ॥ 7
 न च मे क्रोधमुत्सष्टुं बुद्धिर्भवति पार्थिव ।
 तथाभूतं हि तत्कर्म न शापस्तस्य विद्यते ॥ 8
 काकपक्षधरं शूरं ज्येष्ठं मे दातुमर्हसि । 12b
 शक्तो ह्येष मया गुप्तो दिव्येन स्वेन तेजसा ॥ 13a
 तेषां न चान्यः काकुत्थाद्योद्धुमुत्सहते
 पुमान् ॥ 16a
 वीर्योत्सिक्ता हि ते पापाः कालकूटोपमा
 रणे ॥ 17a
 न च पुत्रकृतं स्नेहं कर्तुमर्हसि पार्थिव । 19a
 हन्त नूनं विजानामि हतांस्तान्विद्धि
 राक्षसान् ॥ 20a
 अहं वेद्मि महात्मानं रामं राजीवलोचनम् । 21a
 वसिष्ठश्च महातेजा ये चान्ये दीर्घदर्शिनः । 21b
 यदि धर्मो महत्त्वं च यशस्ते मनसि स्थितम् ।
 तन्मह्यं समभिप्रेतमात्मजं दातुमर्हसि ॥ 22

... ... ।
 ॥ 1
 ... तवैव भुवि नान्यतः ।
 ... वसिष्ठव्यपदेशिनः ॥ 2
 ... कार्यस्य निश्चयम् ।
 कुरुष्व राजशार्दूल भव-
 सत्यप्रतिश्रवः ॥ 3
 ... नियमं ... । 4a
 ... तस्मिन्नियमनिश्चये । 6b
 ... देशादपाक्रमे । 7a
 । 7c
 तथाभूता हि सा चर्या न
 शापस्तत्र मुच्यते । 8a
 ... वीर ... ।
 ॥ 9
 न च तौ राघवादन्यो
 हन्तुमुत्सहते पुमान् ।
 वीर्योत्सिक्तौ हि ते पापौ
 कालपाशवशंगतौ ॥ 12
 ... पुत्रगतं ... ॥ 13
 अहं ते प्रतिजानामि हतौ
 तौ विद्धि राक्षसौ ।
 ... सत्यपराक्रमम् ॥ 14
 वसिष्ठोऽपि महातेजा ये चेमे
 तपसि स्थिताः । 15a
 यदि ते धर्मलाभं तु यशश्च
 परमं भुवि । 15b
 अभिप्रेतमसंसक्तमात्मजं
 दातुमर्हसि । 17b

अत्राप्यनुज्ञां काकुत्स्थ ददतां तव मन्त्रिणः ।	यद्यभ्यनुज्ञां काकुत्स्थ ददत तव मन्त्रिणः । 16b
वसिष्ठप्रमुखाः सर्वे तेन रामं विसर्जय ॥ 24	... ततो ... । 17a
नात्येति कालः कालज्ञ यथायं मम राघव ।	... यज्ञस्य ... । 18b
तथा कुरुष्व भद्रं ते मा च शोके मनः कृथाः ॥ 25	... । 19a
इत्येवमुक्त्वा धर्मात्मा धर्मार्थसहितं वचः ।	... । 19b
विरराम महातेजा विश्वामित्रो मुनीश्वरः ॥ 27	... महामतिः । 20a

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तच्छ्रुत्वा राजशार्दूलो विश्वामित्रस्य भाषितम् । 1a	... । 1a
ऊन षोडशवर्षोऽयं रामो राजीवलोचनः ।	... मे ... ।
न युद्धयोग्यतामस्य पश्यामि सह राक्षसैः ॥ 2	... । 2
इयमक्षौहिणी पूर्णा यस्याः पतिरहं प्रभो । 3a	... सेना यस्याहं पतिरीश्वरः । 3a
इमे हि शूरा विक्रान्ता भृत्या मन्त्र- विशारदाः ।	शूराश्च ... मेऽस्त्रविशारदाः ।
अहं चैषां धनुष्पाणिर्गोप्ता समरमूर्धन्ति ॥ 4	अहमेव ... । 4
विप्रयुक्तो हि रामेण मुहूर्तमपि नोत्सहे ।	... । 8b
जीवितं जीविताकाङ्क्षी न रामं नेतुमर्हसि ॥ 18	... मूनिशार्दूल ... । 9a
ज्येष्ठं धर्ममयं तस्मान्न रामं नेतुमर्हसि ॥ 22b	... ज्येष्ठे धर्मप्रधाने च... । 12a
चतुरङ्गसमायुक्तं मया सह बलं नय । 23b	... च तं नय । 10a
किंव्रीर्या राक्षसास्ते तु कस्य पुत्रा कथं च ते । 24a	... च ... इच के । 12b
कथं तेन प्रकर्तव्यं तेषां रामेण रक्षसाम् ।	कथं च प्रतिकर्तव्यं ... । 13b
मामकैर्बालकैर्ब्रह्मन्मया वा कूटयोधिनाम् ॥ 25	मामकैर्वा बलैः ... । 14a
सर्वं मे शंस भगवन् यथा तेषां महारणे ।	... कथं तेषां मया रणे । 14b
स्थातव्यं दुष्टभाग्यानां वीर्योत्सिक्ता हि राक्षसाः ॥ 26	... दुष्टभावानां ... । 15a
साक्षाद् वैश्रवणभ्राता पुत्रो विश्रवसो मुनेः । 27b	... । 18a
तत्संग्रामे न शक्ताः स्मो वयं तस्य दुरात्मनः । 28b	न हि शक्तोऽस्मि संग्रामे स्थातुं तस्य दुरात्मनः । 20b
तस्मात्प्रसादं धर्मज्ञ कुरु त्वं मम पुत्रके ।	स त्वं ... ।
मम चैवाल्पभाग्यस्य भवान्हि परदैवतम् ॥ 31	... दैवतं हि भवान्गुरुः ॥ 21
देवदानवगन्धर्वा यक्षाः पतंगपन्नगाः ।	... ।
न शक्ता रावणं योद्धुं, किं पुनः पुरुषा युधि ॥ 32	... सोढुं किं पुनर्मानवा युधि ॥ 22

महावीर्यवतां वीर्यमादत्ते युधि राक्षसः ।
 तेन सार्धं न शक्ताः स्म संयुगे तस्य
 बालकैः ॥ 33
 कथयत्त्वसुरप्रस्थं नैव मोक्षयामि पुत्रकम् । 35b
 सुन्दोपसुन्दयोश्चैव पुत्रौ वैवस्वतोपमौ ।
 यज्ञविघ्नकरी ब्रूहि न ते दास्यामि पुत्रकम् ॥ 36

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तच्छ्रुत्वा वचन तस्य स्नेहपर्याकुलेक्षणम् ।
 समन्युः कौशिको वाक्यं प्रत्युवाच
 महीपतिम् ॥ 1
 करिष्यामीति संश्रुत्य प्रतिज्ञां हातुमर्हसि । 2a
 राघवाणामयुक्तोऽयं कुलस्यास्य विपर्ययः । 3a
 यदि त्वं न क्षमो राजन्गमिष्यामि यथागतम् ।
 हीनप्रतिज्ञां काकुत्स्थ सुखी भव सबान्धवः ॥ 4
 तस्मिन्कोपपरीतेऽथ विश्वामित्रे महात्मनि ।
 चचाल वसुधा कृत्स्ना सुरांश्च भयमाविशत् ॥ 5
 इक्ष्वाकूणां कुले जातः साक्षाद्धर्म इवापरः । 7a
 घृतिमान्सुव्रतो भूत्वा न धर्मं हातुमर्हसि । 8a
 त्रिषु लोकेषु विख्यातो धर्मेण यशसा युतः । 8b
 स्वधर्मं प्रतिपद्यस्व न धर्मं हातुमर्हसि । 9a
 करिष्यामीति संश्रुत्य तत्ते राजन्नकुर्वतः ।
 इष्टापूर्तं हरेद्धर्मं तस्माद्रामं विसर्जय ॥ 10
 गुप्तं पुरुषसिंहेन ज्वलनेनामृतं यथा ।
 कृतास्त्रमकृतास्त्रं वा नैनं शक्यन्ति
 राक्षसाः ॥ 13
 एष विग्रहवान्धर्म एष वीर्यवतां वरः ।
 एष बुद्ध्याऽधिको लोके तपसां च
 परायणम् ॥ 14
 एषोऽस्त्रं विविधं वेत्ति त्रेलोक्ये सचराचरे ।
 नैतदन्यः पुमान्वेत्ति न च वेत्स्यति कश्चन ॥ 15

स तु वीर्यवतां ... रावणः ।
 तेन चाहं न शक्तोऽस्मि संयोद्धुं
 तस्य वा बलैः ॥ 23
 कथमप्यमरप्रस्थं संग्रामा-
 णामकोविदम् । 24b
 अथ कालोपमौ युद्धे सुतौ
 सुन्दोपसुन्दयोः । 25b
 यज्ञविघ्नकरो तौ ते नैव
 दास्यामि पुत्रकम् । 26a

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... स्नेहपर्याकुलाक्षरम् ।
 ... ॥ 1
 पूर्वमर्थं प्रतिश्रुत्य इच्छसि ।
 ... ॥ 2
 यदीदं ते क्षमं ... ।
 मिथ्याप्रतिज्ञां ... सुहृद्वृतः ॥ 3
 तस्य रोषपरीतस्य विश्वा-
 मित्रस्य धीमतः ।
 ... देवानां च भयं महत् ॥ 4
 ... ॥ 5
 ... ॥ 6
 ... धर्मात्मा इति राघवः ।
 ... नाधर्मं वोढुमर्हसि ॥ 7
 प्रतिश्रुत्य करिष्येति उक्तं
 वाक्यमकुर्वतः ।
 इष्टापूर्तवधो भूयात् ... ॥ 8
 गुप्तं कुशिकपुत्रेण ... ।
 ... ॥ 9
 ... ॥ 10
 विद्याऽधिको ... तपसश्च ॥ 10
 ... ॥ 11

न देवा नर्षयः केचिन्नासुरा न च राक्षसाः ।
 न नागा यक्षगन्धर्वाः समेताः सद्यः मुनेः ॥ 16
 कौशिकाय पुरा दत्तं यदा राज्यं
 समन्वगात् ॥ 17b
 ते हि पुत्राः कृशाश्वस्य प्रजापतिसुतोपमाः ॥ 18a
 जया च सुप्रभा चैव दाक्षायण्यौ सुमध्यमे ॥ 19a
 पञ्चाशतं सुताञ्जने जया लब्धवरा पुरा ।
 वधार्थं सुरसैन्यानां ते क्षमाः
 कामचारिणः ॥ 20
 सुप्रभा जनयामास पुत्रान्पञ्चाशतं परान् ।
 संघर्षान्नाम दुर्धर्षान्दुराकारान्वलीयसः ॥ 21
 एवंवीर्यो महातेजा विश्वामित्रो जगन्मुनिः ।
 न रामगमने बुद्धिं विक्लवां कर्तुमर्हसि ॥ 22

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तथा वसिष्ठे ब्रुवति राजा दशरथः सुतम् ।
 संप्रहृष्टमना राममाजुहाव सलक्ष्मणम् ॥ 1

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

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एतिस्मिन्नेव काले तु विश्वामित्र इति श्रुतः ।
 महर्षिरभ्यगाद्रष्टुं तमयोध्यानराधिपम् ॥ 3
 तस्य यज्ञोऽथ रक्षोभिस्तथा विलुलुपे किल ।
 मायावीर्यबलोन्मत्तैर्धर्मकार्यस्य धीमतः ॥ 4
 रक्षार्थं तस्य यज्ञस्य द्रष्टुमैच्छत्स पार्थिवम् ।
 न हि शक्नोत्यविघ्नेन समाप्तुं स मुनिः
 क्रतुम् ॥ 5
 ततस्तेषां विनाशार्थमुद्यतस्तपसां निधिः ।
 विश्वामित्रो महातेजा अयोध्यामभ्य-
 गत्युरीम् ॥ 6
 स राज्ञो दर्शनाकाङ्क्षी द्वाराध्यक्षानुवाच ह ।
 शीघ्रमाख्यात मां प्राप्तं कौशिकं गाधिनः
 सुप्तम् ॥ 7

... केचिन्नामराः ... ।
 गन्धर्वयक्षप्रवराः सकिनर-
 महोरगाः ॥ 12
 ... दत्ता ... प्रशासति ॥ 13b
 तेऽपि पुत्राः कृशाश्वस्य
 प्रजापतिसुतासुताः ॥ 14a
 ... दक्षकन्ये ... ॥ 15a
 ... लेभे ... वरान् ... ।
 वधायासुरसैन्यानामप्रमेयान-
 रूपिणः ॥ 16
 ... जनयन्नापि ... पुनः ।
 संहारान्नाम...दुराक्रामान् ॥ 17
 ... महायशाः ।
 ...राजन् संशयं गन्तुमर्हसि ॥ 20

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... स्वयम् ।
 प्रहृष्टवदनो ... ॥ 1

NORTH-WESTERN
(KASHMIRI) RECENSION

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... ।
 ...अभ्ययात्...अयोध्यायां ॥ 7
 ... तदा ... ।
 ... ॥ 8
 ... इच्छन् ... ।
 ... तं ... ॥ 9
 ... विनाशायाभ्युद्यत ... ।
 ... अगमत् ... ॥ 10
 ... ।
 ... गाधिनन्दनम् ॥ 11

- तस्य तद्वचनं श्रुत्वा द्वास्था राजगृहं ययौ । ... राजवेश्म प्रदुद्बुधुः ।
 संभ्रान्तमनसः सर्वे तेन वाक्येन चोदिताः ॥ 8 ... मानसाः ... नोदिताः ॥ 12
 स दृष्ट्वा मालितं लक्ष्म्या भीतस्तमृषि- ...ज्वलितं ... ऋषिमागतम् ।
 सत्तमम् ।
 प्रहृष्टवदनो राजा स्वयमर्घ्यं न्यवेदयत् ॥ 31 ... ॥ 15
 स राज्ञः प्रतिगृह्यार्घ्यं शास्त्रदृष्टेन कर्मणा । राज्ञश्च ... ॥ 17a
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 ।
 सत्यवान् ... ॥ 6
 ... धर्मात्मेति यशोधनः । 7a
 ॥ 9b

करिष्यामीति संश्रुत्य तत्ते राजन्नकुर्वतः ।	...	तद्वै	...
इष्टापूतं हरेद्धर्मं तस्माद्राम विसर्जय ॥ 10 ॥ 10
गुप्तं पुरुषसिंहेण ज्वलनेनामृतं यथा ।	...	कुशिकपुत्रेण	... ॥ 11b
कृतास्त्रमकृतास्त्रं वा नैनं शक्यन्ति राक्षसाः ॥ 13	...	ध्वंश्यन्ति	... ॥ 11a
एषविग्रहवान्धर्म एष वीर्यवतां वरः ।	...		...
एषबुद्ध्याऽधिको लोके तपसा च परायणम् ॥ 14	...	तपसश्च परायणम्	॥ 12
एषोऽस्त्रं विविधं वेत्ति त्रैलोक्ये सचराचरे ।	...		...
नैतदन्यः पुमान्वेत्ति न च वेत्स्यति कश्चन ॥ 15	...		... ॥ 13
न देवा नर्षयः केचिन्नासुरा न च राक्षसाः । 16a	...		... ॥ 14a
अस्त्रमस्मै कृशाश्वेन परैः परमदुर्जयम् ।	...		...
कौशिकायपुरा दत्तं यदा राज्यं समन्वगात् ॥ 17	...	समन्वगात्	॥ 15
ते हि पुत्राः कृशाश्वस्य प्रजापतिसुतोपमाः । 18a	...		... ॥ 16a
जया च सुप्रभा चैव दाक्षायण्यौ सुमध्यमे ।	...	दाक्षायिम्यौ	...
तयोस्तु यान्यपत्यानि शतं परमदुर्जयम् ॥ 19	...		... ॥ 17
पञ्चाशतं सुतावज्ज्ञे जया लब्धवरा पुरा ।	...		...
वधार्थं मुरसैन्यानां ते क्षमाः कामचारिणः ॥ 20	वधाय परसैन्यानामक्ष-		
	यान्काम रूपिणः ॥ 18		
सुप्रभा जनयायास पुत्रान्पञ्चाशतं परान् । 21a	...		... ॥ 19a
एवं वीर्यो महातेजा विश्वामित्रो जगन्मुनिः ।	...	महातपाः ।	
न रामगमने बुद्धिं विक्लवां कर्तुमर्हसि ॥ 20	...	वक्लव्याद्रोद्धुमर्हसि ॥ 20	

I. 10

तथा वसिष्ठे ब्रुवति राजा दशरथः सुतम् ।
संप्रहृष्टमना राममाजुहाव सलक्ष्मणम् ॥

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

I. 6

एतस्मिन्नेव तु विश्वामित्र इति श्रुतः ।
महर्षिरभ्यगाद्ब्रष्टुं तमयोध्यानराधिपम् ॥ 3
उपविष्टाय तस्मै स विश्वामित्राय धीमते । 37a
कश्च ते परमः कामः किं च ते
करवाण्ययम् ।
पात्रभूतोऽसि मे विप्र प्राप्तः परमधार्मिकः ॥ 44
साक्षादिव ब्रह्मणो मे तवाभ्यागमनं मतम् ।

I. 20

...
प्रहृष्टवदनं ... आजहार ॥ 1

THE BENGAL RECENSION

I. 21

...
... अयोध्यायां ... ॥ 1
...
... ॥ 12b
कस्तेऽभिलषितः कामः किं
करोमि प्रशाधि मां ।
... चिरस्याभ्यागतोऽतिथिः ॥ 17
... ॥

पूतोऽस्म्यनुगृहीतश्च तवाभ्यागमात्सुने ॥ 49	प्रीतो ... ॥ 19
अद्य मे सफलं जन्म जीवितं तत्सुजीवितम् ॥ 50b	... ॥ 20a
यत्कार्यं येन वार्थेन प्राप्तोऽसि मुनिपुंगव ।	... चार्थेन ... ।
कृतमित्येव तद्विद्धि मान्योऽसीति सदा मम ॥ 52	... सुभृशं मम ॥ 21
इदमतिमधुरं निशम्य वाक्यं, श्रुतिसुख- मात्मविदा विनीतमुक्तम् ।	... ॥
प्रथितगुणयशा गुरौर्विशिष्टं मुनिवृषभः परमं जगाम हर्षम् ॥ 55	... गुणैर्विशिष्टो ... ॥ 23

I. 7

I. 22

तच्छ्रुत्वा राजसिंहस्य वाक्यमद्भुतविस्तरम् ।	... ॥
हृष्टरोमा महातेजा विश्वामित्रोऽभ्य भाषत ॥ 1	... ॥ 1
सदृशं राजशार्दूल तवैवैतन्महीतले ।	... त्वयैतद्वाक्यमीरितं ।
महावंशप्रसूतस्य वसिष्ठवशवर्तिनः ॥ 2	सौरे वंशेऽभिजातेन वसिष्ठ- वशवर्तिना ॥ 2

ईदृशी यज्ञदीक्षा सा मम तस्मिन्महाक्रतौ ।	... यज्ञदीक्षासौ ... ॥ 7b
त्वप्रसादादविघ्नेन प्रापयेयं महाफलं ॥ 9	... प्रापयेहं क्रियाफलम् ॥ 8a
त्रातुमर्हसि मामातं शरणार्थिनमागतम् । 10a	... ॥ 8b
वसिष्ठप्रमुखाः सर्वे तेन रामं विसर्जय । 24b	... ततो ... ॥ 18b

I. 8

I. 23

न युद्धयोग्यतामस्य पश्यामि सह राक्षसैः । 2b	... ॥ 2b
नववर्षसहस्राणि मम जातस्य कौशिक । 9a	... साम्प्रतम् ॥ 9a

I. 9

I. 24

तच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं तस्य स्नेहपर्याकुलेक्षणम् ।	... स्नेहव्याकुलिताक्षरं ।
समन्युः कौशिको वाक्यं प्रत्युवाच महीपतिम् ॥ 1	... ॥ 1
कृतास्त्रमकृतास्त्रं वा नैनं शक्यन्ति राक्षसाः । 13b	... ॥ 10b

I. 10

I. 25

एवमुक्तो वसिष्ठेन राजा दशरथः सुतम् ।	... ॥
संप्रहृष्टमना राममाजुहाव सलक्ष्मणम् ॥ 1	... ॥ 1

It will be seen that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa (V.R.) has greater agreement with the Nirṇayasāgara edition ('C') and the North-Western (N.W.) than with the Bengal recension. Again the result of the examination of the common verses in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the 'C' and the N.W. is as follows :

1. *Common verses in V.R. I.6; 'C' I.18; and N.W. I.16.*

6	N.W.	
7	N.W.	'C'*
8	N.W.	'C'*
9	first part common and then change.	
31ab	N.W.*	
32a	N.W.	'C'
33b		'C'
34	N.W.	
45		'C'

2. *Common verses in V.R. I.7; 'C' I.19; and N.W. I.17.*

1	N.W.	'C'
2a	N.W.	'C'
2b	N.W.	
3	N.W.*	
8a		'C'
8b	N.W.*	
12a 13a	N.W.	
13b 14a	V.R. departs from both.	
14b 15a	N.W.*	
16a 17a	N.W.	
20a 21a	N.W.	
22	V.R. departs from both.	
24ab	N.W.	'C'*
25	N.W.	
27	V.R. departs from both.	

3. *Common verses in V.R. I.8; 'C' I.20; and N.W. I.18.*

1	N.W.	
2a	N.W.	
2b		'C'
3	N.W.	
4	N.W.	
18	V.R. changes b.	
22	N.W.	
23b		'C'
24a	N.W.	

* Indicates some change.

24b	V.R. departs from both.
25	V.R. departs from both.
26	N.W.
27	N.W.
28	N.W.
31	N.W.*
32	V.R. departs from both.
33	N.W.*
35	N.W.*
36	N.W.

4. *Common verses in V.R. I.9; 'C' I.21; and N.W. I.19.*

1	N.W.	'C'
2	N.W.*	
4	N.W.	
5a	V.R. changes.	
5b	N.W.	
7		'C'*
8	N.W.*	
10	N.W.	
13		'C'*
14	N.W.	'C'
15	N.W.	
16a	N.W.	'C'
16b	V.R. independent.	
17	N.W.	
18a	N.W.	
18b	V.R. independent.	
19	N.W.	
20	N.W.*	
21a	N.W.	
21b		'C'
22	N.W.*	

5. *Common verses in V.R. I.10; 'C' I.22; and N.W. I.20.*

1a	N.W.	
1b		'C'*

From this it will be clearly seen that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is following the North-Western Indian, Kashmiri recension. Another sure indication is the fact that the speech of Daśaratha in the Vāsiṣṭha

Rāmāyaṇa I.8, from verse 28 onwards giving Rāvaṇa's history and greatness is given in 'C' as the speech from Viśvāmitra, while it is the N.W. recension which gives it as the speech of the king. The N.W. has been preserved in various manuscripts and it would be further seen that most of the readings of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa agree with those of the N.W. as given by the 'Bha' Ms. hailing from Bharatpur.

Yet it is equally clear that the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is not merely borrowing from the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki. He has made a few additions which are certainly worthy of a good poet and attention may be drawn to verses 10-31 in I.6 which contain a very good description of the court of King Daśaratha and that of Viśvāmitra; similarly to I.8, verses 6-16 where Daśaratha describes the young age of Rāma, and also to many very fine similies which he has scattered throughout his narrative. To mention but a few of these fine similies :

- जटावल्या वृत्तस्कन्धं ससंध्याभ्रमिवाचलम् । 6.18
 साधो स्वनुगृहीताः स्मो रविरोवाम्बुजाकराः । 6.27
 चन्द्रबिम्ब इवोन्मग्नं वेदवेद्य विदांवर । 6.48
 ऋते केसरिणः क्रुद्धान्मत्तानां करिणामिव । 7.16
 अनारतगता धारा जलदस्येव पांसवः । 7.18
 हिमेनेव हि पद्मानः संपन्नो हरिणः कृशः । 8.10
 शरदीव पयोवाहो नूनं निःसारतां गतः । 8.12
 स भवान्केसरी भूत्वा मृगतामिव वाञ्छसि । 9.2
 न कदाचन जायन्ते शीतांशोरुष्णरश्मयः । 9.3

All these are his own and the Epic gives no hint for these. One might further add that whenever the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is making a choice of a reading from the Epic it has an unmistakable flavour of improvement on account of some notable figure of speech, better phrasing, softer music and appropriateness.

The North-Western Indian recension is the Western Indian Kashmiri recension and so the conclusion reached here that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa follows this recension is likely to offer some clue to the solution of the problem regarding the land of origin of the work. Dr. V. Raghavan has studied the relation of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the Bhagavadgītā and has come to the conclusion that the

Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa had before it the Kashmirian version of the text crossed by the Vulgate.¹ Such a text of the Gītā could be available in Kashmir only. Now it will be seen that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa had the Kashmiri recension of the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa before it. It shows very little agreement with the Bengal recension and so Bengal cannot possibly be the home of the text. On the other hand the claims of Kashmir become very strong in view of the fact that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa knows the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa as known to Kashmir.

1. J.O.R., Madras, Vol. XIII, pp. 73-82

CHAPTER II

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND THE MAHĀBHĀRATA

We have discussed in the previous chapter the relation that appears to exist between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki. It would be equally interesting to find out the relation that exists between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, the epic of the Vedānta philosophers and the Mahābhārata, the epic of the bards of ancient India.

Dr. Atreya who has touched this problem has to say in this connection as follows :

“this, the beginning of the V.R. looks like the traditional way in which many a Purāṇa begins, and in which also the Mbh. begins . . . When we compare the sixth chapter of the Anuśā-sana-parvan of the Mbh. with the tenth *sarga* of the second *prakaraṇa* of the V.R. and the doctrine of the V.R., “Superiority of Effort over Fate” II. 5-9, we are led to believe that there may have existed even before the composition of the present Mbh. some such work which contained the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha which he had learnt from Brahmā. In the Mbh., we read that one of the many questions that Yudhiṣṭhira put to Bhīṣma, when the latter was at his death-bed of arrows, was : “Which of the two, fate and effort, is superior ?” (Anu. 6.1). Bhīṣma says in reply : “In this connection there is an old story of Vasiṣṭha and Brahmā, O Yudhiṣṭhira.” (Anu. 6.2). In the V.R., II.10, Vasiṣṭha tells Rāma that he learnt his philosophy from Brahmā. The views that are said to have been expounded by Brahmā to Vasiṣṭha on the problem raised by Yudhiṣṭhira in the Mbh. are almost identical with the views of Vasiṣṭha as given to Rāma in the V.R. II.5-9. All this shows that there might have been in existence even before the Mbh. some work which incorporated the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha, which might have formed the nucleus of the present V.R.”

The comparison of the Mbh. Anu. 6 with V.R. II.10 is very

instructive no doubt. Here is a close summary of the argument of the Mbh. passage :

1. Yudhiṣṭhira's question regarding the superiority of *Daiva* and *Pauruṣa*.
- 2-4. Bhīṣma's reference to Vasiṣṭha and Brahmā *saṁvāda*.
- 5-49. Brahma's discourse on *Daiva* and *Pauruṣa*.
 - i. 5-8. Analogy of the *kṣetra* and *bīja* for *Pauruṣa* and *Daiva*.
 - ii. 8-17. Importance of *karman* as leading to *bhāgya*.
 - iii. 18. Viṣṇu practises penance.
- iv. 19-26. Futility of *Daiva* without *karman*, *Pauruṣa*.
- v. 26-30. Self and *Pauruṣa* secure everything.
- vi. 30-40. Instances of *Pauruṣa* proving more powerful than *Daiva* :
 Yayāti going to *swarga*, Purūravas obtaining heavens, Fate of Sudās, king of Kosala and of Rāma and Aśvatthāman, Vasu through a single falsehood going to Pātāla, Bali, the son of Virocana vanquished by Viṣṇu's *Pauruṣa*, Janamejaya the killer of *dvija* ladies saved through Indra, Vaiśampāyana responsible for a child-murder and death of a *brahmin* not saved by *Daiva*, Nṛga in spite of his *gopradāna* becoming a *kṛkalāsa*. Dhundhumāra being unable to enjoy the reward of the *sātra* and lastly the Pāṇḍavas securing the throne back from the Dhārtarāṣṭras by valour and not through *Daiva*.
- vii. 41-44. Fate does not save a person. *Karman-Pauruṣa* grants power to men; *karmasamāyukta Daiva* is like fire getting help of a breeze and *Daiva* without *Pauruṣa* is like a lamp without the oil.
- viii. 45-47. A *karmahīna* person cannot enjoy pleasures even when they come his way. *Karman* secures everything. *Daiva* follows *karman*.
- ix. 48-49. Conclusion by Brahmā and exhortation to secure *swarga* through *Daiva* and *karman*.

In this manner the argument in these 49 verses is complete in itself and the entire dialogue is described as *purātana itihāsa*. In addition to the various interesting instances referred to, one has also to note the peculiar similies that occur in this passage :

क्षेत्रं पुरुषकारस्तु देवं बीजमुवाहृतम् । ४

अकृत्वा मानुषं कर्म यो देवमनुवर्तते ।
 वृथा श्राम्यति संप्राप्य पतिं क्लीबमिवाङ्गना ॥ 20
 यथाग्निः पवनोद्धतः सुसूक्ष्मोऽपि महान्मवेत् ।
 तथा कर्मसमायुक्तं देवं साधु विवर्धते ॥ 43
 यथा तैलक्षयाद्दीपः प्रह्लासमुपगच्छति ।
 तथा कर्मक्षयाद्देवं प्रह्लासमुपगच्छति ॥ 44

Lastly one has to note the principal idea that *Pauruṣa* or *karman* is of prime importance. Even the gods etc. owe their greatness to *Pauruṣa*.

ज्योतीषि त्रिदशा नागा यथाश्चन्द्रार्कमास्ताः ।
 सर्वे पुरुषकारेण मानुष्याद्देवतां गताः ॥ 14
 येन लोकास्त्रयः सृष्टाः देवताः सर्वाश्च देवताः ।
 स एष भगवान्विष्णुः समुद्रे तप्यते तपः ॥ 18
 कृती सर्वत्र लभते प्रतिष्ठां माग्यसंयुताम् ।
 अकृती लभते भ्रष्टः क्षते क्षारावसेचनम् ॥ 11

On turning to the V.R. chapters which deal with the same topic one has to note at the outset a few very important points. In the first place, the V.R. treatment is a very systematic one, the topic of *Pauruṣa* and *Daiva* being sub-divided into suitable topics and each being discussed in a separate chapter. Thus the topics in the V.R. are *Pauruṣa-prakarāṇa*, *Pauruṣa-sthāpana*, *Daiva-nirākaraṇa*, *Pauruṣa-prādhānya-samarthana*, *Daiva-nirākaraṇa*, *Karma-vicāra* and these are given in *sargas* IV-IX, in Book II. All these *sargas* again in themselves are independently complete and the argument, and the idealistic philosophy of V.R. are always present; in fact the whole discussion of the *Daiva-Pauruṣa* problem is made against the background of the V.R. philosophy. In the Mbh. however there is no reference to any philosophy at all. The impression created by the V.R. treatment is that some later writer is writing the passage, for here again we see an enlargement of the Mbh. ideas. The verses of the Mbh. are explained in its own style. Thus for instance, the Mbh., Anu., 6.14 :

ज्योतीषि त्रिदशा नागा यथाश्चन्द्रार्कमास्ताः ।
 सर्वे पुरुषकारेण मानुष्याद्देवतां गताः ॥

is amplified in the V.R. II.4.13-16 :

पौरुषेण प्रयत्नेन त्रैलोक्यैश्वर्यमुन्दरासु ।
 कश्चित्प्राणिविशेषो हि शक्रतां समुपागतः ॥ 13
 पौरुषेणैव यत्नेन सहसाम्भोरुहास्पदम् ।
 कश्चिदेव चिदुल्लासो ब्रह्मतामधितिष्ठति ॥ 14
 सारेण पुरुषार्थेण स्वेनैव गरुडध्वजः ।
 कश्चिदेव पुमानेव पुरुषोत्तमतां गतः ॥ 15
 पौरुषेणैव यत्नेन ललनावलिताकृतिः ।
 शरीरी कश्चिदेवेह गतश्चन्द्रार्धचूडताम् ॥ 16

and again its repetition in 7.7,8,31 :

पुरुषार्थेन देवानां गुरुरेव बृहस्पतिः ।
 शुक्रो दैत्येन्द्रगुरुतां पुरुषार्थेन चास्थितः ॥ 7
 दैन्यदास्त्रिद्वद्भुःखार्ता अपि सावो नरोत्तमाः ।
 पौरुषेणैव यत्नेन याता देवेन्द्रतुल्यताम् ॥ 8
 पौरुषेण जिता दैत्याः स्थापिता भुवनक्रियाः ।
 रचितानि जगन्तीह विष्णुना न च दैवतः ॥ 31

and again a repetition of the same in 21, 22, 23.8. The idea of the epic that there is nothing like *Daiva* also appears in the form of an idea expanded. Thus the epic in one place observes :

न दैवमकृते किञ्चित्कस्यचिद्वातुमर्हति । 22.6

and has again *na daivam trāyite naram* (42.6). The V.R. on the other hand has *Daivam tu na kyacit dr̥ṣṭamato jagati pauruṣam* (6.7) or *Daivamāśvāsanāmātram duḥkhe pelavabudhiṣu* (15.7), *Mudhaiḥ prakalpitaṁ daivam tatparāste kṣayam gatāḥ* (16.8). The epic only gives the hint of the notion that *Daiva* is a notion detrimental to the progress of man but it is the V.R. which makes a cogent argument to prove the same. It defines *Daiva* as *prāktanam pauruṣam tadvai daiva-śabdena kathyate* (35.6) and pointing out the natural opposition between the *prāktana Pauruṣa* and the *adyatana Pauruṣa*, observes that the present is bound to be more powerful. The twofold classification of *Pauruṣa* itself as *Utsāstra* and *Sāstrita* is also original for which there is nothing in the epic. The two, *prāktana* and the present *aihiḥka*, fight like two rams and the weaker one is defeated.

द्वौ हृडाविव युध्येते पुरुषार्थौ समासमौ ।

प्राक्तनश्चैहिकश्चैव शाम्यत्यत्रात्पवीर्यवान् ॥ 5.5

All this is no doubt a fuller and more complete treatment of the topic. Another place is more interesting. The epic as usual in its simple epic style observes :

शौचेन लभते विप्रः क्षत्रियो विक्रमेण तु ।

वैश्यः पुरुषकारेण शूद्रः शुश्रूषया श्रियम् ॥ 6.16

The V.R. makes this more universal and characteristically poetical in :

प्रवृत्तिरेव प्रथमं यथाशास्त्रविहारिणाम् ।

प्रसेव वर्णभेदानां साधनी सर्वकर्मणाम् ॥ 5.1

The *śleṣa* on *Varṇabhedānām* is too obvious to escape attention.

Further the definition of *Pauruṣa* itself is not to be seen in the epic discussion. It is the V.R. passage which tells us that :

अर्थप्रापककार्यैकप्रयत्नपरता बुधैः ।

प्रोक्ता पौरुषशब्देन सर्वमासाद्यतेऽनया ॥ 7.24

which is to be compared with 32.6. This *Pauruṣa* is again identified with *spanda*, the V.R. word for activity. Again, in the epic we meet with the ancient verse :

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ।

आत्मैव आत्मनः साक्षी कृतस्याप्यक्रुतस्य च ॥ 6.27

and this is echoed in the V.R. :

ये समुद्योगमुत्सृज्य स्थिता देवपरायणः ।

ते धर्ममर्थकामं च नाशयन्त्यात्मविद्विषः ॥ 7.3

Not only is *Pauruṣa* well defined but its different forms and aspects are also pointed out as in :

संवित्स्पन्दो मनःस्पन्द ऐन्द्रियस्पन्द एव च ।

एतानि पुरुषार्थस्य रूपाण्येभ्यो फलोदयः ॥ 7.4

In a similar manner the bad condition that overtakes a person who relies on fate is described more eloquently in 26-30 of the 6th chapter whereas the epic condemns the fatalists in a verse or two (6.20,42). The three aspects of *Pauruṣa* given in 7.11-14

शास्त्रतो गुरुतश्चैव स्वतश्चेति त्रिसिद्धयः ।

सर्वत्र पुरुषार्थस्य न देवस्य कदाचन ॥ 7.53

are an original addition of the V.R. All this indicates that the

V.R. treatment is more complete and thorough, possibly a development of the epic discussion. The discussion of the epic is no doubt in the background, present before the author of the V.R. passage, but he is not a mere borrower or a slave of the epic. He has his own philosophical position and has a complete discussion of the problem from that particular position.

Even though one can be fairly certain of the point made above, yet one has to note that the very striking four or five epic similies referred to above are all absent in the V.R. which otherwise has no hesitation in borrowing from the epic whole stanzas very freely. The entire V.R. passage is steeped in its natural poetry and is full of phrases like *chittabālaka* (9.32, 33); *samsārajaladhi* (6.24); *bālye gate aviratakalpitakelilole* (5.31); *samsārakuhara* (6.15) etc. It is full of the usual Vedānta analogies as in *saumyāmbutve taraṅgatve salilasya ambutā yathā* (1.4); or *rajvāmiva bhujaṅgamaḥ* (8.3); *yathā ghataḥ parimito yathā parimito paṭaḥ* (5.24). All this leaves no doubt that in the V.R. one meets an expressly Vedānta work of a much later date; at any rate a work which presumes the epic passage and bases its discussion on it.

In a similar manner one has to note that all the instances cited by the epic as proving the supremacy of *Pauruṣa* over fate are not to be met with in the V.R. which has its own illustrations; Viśvāmitra through *Pauruṣa* won *brāhmaṇya*; sages like Vasiṣṭha obtaining through *Pauruṣa* *gaganagāmītā*; Demon-kings being masters of the three worlds only through *Pauruṣa* and the gods snatching back the supremacy by *Pauruṣa* from the demons. Thus where the epic heaps up historical incidents by way of instances as proving the point, the V.R. only in a very general way refers to a few instances of which the case of Viśvāmitra certainly deserves notice. The V.R. tells us that it was through *Pauruṣa* that Viśvāmitra obtained *brāhmaṇya*. The episode is given in the Mbh., Anu., 3 and there one finds that Viśvāmitra became a *brahmin* on account of the interchange of the *carus* made by Satya-vatī and her mother. R̥cika Bhārgava is the hero of the entire episode and it is due to his greatness that the child Viśvāmitra became a *brahmin*.

ऋचीकेनाहितं ब्रह्म परमेतद्युषिष्ठिर । 61.4

One wishes to find evidence of Viśvāmitra's *Pauruṣa* in the entire story. In a similar context one might refer to the story of

Vitahavya also winning *brāhmaṇya*, occurring in the 30th chapter of the same Anuśāsana-parvan. Here again the *brāhmaṇya* is conferred on the person because of the prowess and greatness of a Bhṛgu :

मृगोर्वचनमात्रेण स च ब्रह्मर्षितां गतः । 57b.30

वीतहव्यो महाराज ब्रह्मवादित्वमेव च ॥ 57.30

Both these episodes are clear attempts to glorify the Bhṛgu rather than episodes indicating the convertible nature of the caste, which indeed according to the epic can never be changed as the episode of Mātanga occurring in Anu. 28, 29 and referred to in 3.19 would show. The Bhṛgu stories really belong to the Bhṛguite version of the epic as Dr. Sukthankar has ably argued in his paper on the Bhṛgu stories in the Mbh.¹ The stories are purely brāhmanical narrations glorifying the priests and have no reference to *Pauruṣa* whatsoever, and as such hardly fit in the V.R. discussion. But this will also prove that the author of the V.R. had definitely the Mbh. before him. The epic author is responsible for the absurdity of referring to the Kaurava-Pāṇḍava war which as a matter of fact was only a very recent affair and the V.R. author drops all such references. The V.R. discussion is more theoretical as the discussion of the *bhikṣuka* becoming a king by the selection through the auspicious elephant would show. The V.R. frankly observes that this is no chance but this is either the *Pauruṣa* of the ministers, of the elephant and of the citizen or the *prāktana Pauruṣa* of the *bhikṣuka* proving powerful and deciding the issue (6.11-18).

Another important point about the V.R. discussion is that it is permeated through and through by a particular and definite philosophical standpoint, that all the world is purely mental. The importance of the mind is recognised everywhere. Thus in the 9th chapter it is observed :

मनो हि पुरुषस्तस्माद्देवं नास्तीति निश्चयः । 9.18

or

मनश्चित्तं वासना च कर्म देवं च निश्चयः ।

राम दुर्निश्चयस्यैताः संज्ञाः सद्भिर्बुद्धाहताः ॥ 9.20

1. The Bhṛgu and the Bharata : A Text—Historical Study—Critical Studies in the Mahābhārata, Vol. 1, pp. 278-337.

again

द्विविधो वासनाव्यूहः शुभश्चैवाशुमश्च ते ।

प्राक्तनो विद्यते राम द्वयोरेकतरोऽयं वा ॥ 9.25

and finally

पौरुषेणैव यत्नेन पालयेच्चित्तबालकम् । 9.33

In fact, the whole of the 9th *sarga* tries to fit in the *Daiva-Pauruṣa* problem in the frame of the V.R. philosophy and to explain it accordingly. The discussion in the 9th is based on the ideas which have been repeatedly stressed in the previous chapters, as for instance, the idea of the *śubha* and *aśubha Pauruṣa* which appears in the 7th *sarga*. Thus, though it could be said that the Mbh. passage has inspired the V.R. author as the definition of *Daiva* also could be seen in—*kṛtam agryaṁ karma samyāti daivam* (6.47)—Mbh. yet there is much that is original in the V.R. as the philosophical background would show. One is tempted to say that the author of the V.R. is amplifying the epic passage. The epic discussion is merely the discussion of a problem in ethics while in the V.R. the problem is viewed and discussed from a particular metaphysical standpoint.

In itself the V.R. discussion is more than complete is compared with the epic discussion with this difference that the epic argument is terse, to the point and backed up by historical instances in characteristic epic style, while the V.R. discussion is in its usual manner of enlargements, repetitions and poetry. The very diction and the versification of the V.R. are richly poetic and smooth. In fact, it reminds one of the rich poetry and happy expression of Pali philosophical works like the *Telakatāha gāthā* etc. The author of the V.R. is never tired of repeating himself. Here also one may note the recurrence of

द्वौ हुडाविव युध्येते पुरुषार्थौ परस्परम् ॥ 6.10

and

क्रियया स्पन्दधमिण्या स्वार्थसाधकता स्वयम् ॥ 6.33

and

the discussion of *śubha* and *aśubha Pauruṣa* and of the imaginary character of *Daiva* in the entire passage. Repetition is a striking feature of the style of the V.R. and the passage under discussion reveals it.

Even when everything is said about the possible relation of the two passages, there is another doubt which arises in the mind

of a critical student. Dr. Atreya thinks that the Mbh. passage points to a previous work which contained the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha which he had learnt from Brahmā. But curiously enough the dialogue as given in the epic refers only to the problem of *Daiva* and *Pauruṣa* and is by no means any complete exposition of any particular philosophy and further does not even contain any reference which could be regarded as the germ out of which the V.R. philosophy as it is has been developed. As has been observed, the epic discussion restricts itself to the *Daiva-Pauruṣa* problem while its counterpart in the V.R. has the discussion against a particular philosophical background which is wholly lacking in the Mbh. Are we then to imagine that this *purātana* Vasiṣṭha-Brahmā-*saṁvāda* was only with reference to this topic or again that the previous work imagined by Dr. Atreya was a *saṁvāda* of Vasiṣṭha and Brahmā embracing philosophy proper and that the Mbh. passage is but a slice? This does not seem probable as the epic passage as it stands has an air of completeness about it and further it has no particular philosophical background, the question is discussed as a very general one and does not appear as a part of some other fuller discussion. Or again was there then no Vasiṣṭha-Brahmā-*saṁvāda* giving the philosophy which could have been the germ for the V.R. as it is now? But the V.R. itself emphatically declares through Vasiṣṭha

स्मराम्यखण्डितं सर्वं संसारभ्रमशान्तये ।

निषधाद्रौ पुरा प्रोक्तं यज्ज्ञानं पद्मजन्मना ॥ II. 2.27

so the *saṁvāda* was *jñāna* that removes the *saṁsārabhrama*, while it is clear that the epic-*saṁvāda* does not contain anything which would merit this description. From all this, one feels like observing that though one cannot definitely say anything as regards the existence or otherwise and the nature of the previous work imagined by Dr. Atreya, one can be quite certain about this, that the V.R. as it is, has definitely used the Mbh. passage and has set it in its philosophical setting. Nor does it appear likely that the two, the Mbh. and the V.R., are working on the same piece but independently. The relation of the V.R. philosophy and the myth of Vasiṣṭha-Brahmā-*saṁvāda* will be discussed in a separate chapter. Here the point made is that the Mbh. passage is much earlier and the V.R. which in point of time is later, is working upon it; rather this very fact is a pointer to its later character.

If at all there is any indication in the epic, it is contrary to

the supposition of Dr. Atreya. The epic, particularly the Anuśāsana-parvan, which contains the present Vasiṣṭha-Brahmā-*saṁvāda* is a treasure-house of the ancient *saṁvādas*—*saṁvādas-rupaitihāsa*. For instance, it contains the following *saṁvādas* :

1. Mṛtyu-Gautami-Kālalubdhaka-Saṁvāda (13.1)
2. Vāsava-Śuka-Saṁvāda (13.5)
3. Vasiṣṭha-Brahmā-Saṁvāda (13.6)
4. Śṛgāla-Vānara-Saṁvāda (13.9)
5. Rāja-Purohita-Saṁvāda (13.10)
6. Śrī-Rukmini-Saṁvāda (13.11)
7. Bhaṅgāsvana-Śakra-Saṁvāda (13.12)
8. Diśā-Aṣṭāvakra-Saṁvāda (13.19)
9. Gotama-Aṅgīrasa-Saṁvāda (13.25)
10. Śīlavṛtti-Siddha-Saṁvāda (13.26)
11. Mātanga-Gardabhī-Saṁvāda (13.27)
12. Nārada-Vāsudeva-Saṁvāda (13.31)
13. Vāsudeva-Pṛthvī-Saṁvāda (13.34)
14. Śakra-Śambara-Saṁvāda (13.36)
15. Nārada-Pañcacūḍā-Saṁvāda (13.38)
16. Nahuṣa-Chyavana-Saṁvāda (13.50)
17. Chyavana-Kuśika-Saṁvāda (13.52)
18. Yama-Brāhmaṇa-Saṁvāda (13.68)
19. Uddālaka-Naciketa-Saṁvāda (13.71)
20. Śakra-Brahmā-Saṁvāda (13.72)
21. Vasiṣṭha-Saudāsa-Saṁvāda (13.78)
22. Go-Śrī-Saṁvāda (13.82)
23. Pitāmaha-Śakra-Saṁvāda (13.83)
24. Jamadagni-Sūrya-Saṁvāda (13.95)
25. Vāsudeva-Pṛthvī-Saṁvāda (13.97)
26. Manu-Suvarṇa-Saṁvāda (13.98)
27. Agastya-Nahuṣa-Saṁvāda (13.99)
28. Kṣatrabandhu-Cāṇḍāla-Saṁvāda (13.101)
29. Gotama-Vāsava-Saṁvāda (13.102)
30. Bhagīratha-Brahmā-Saṁvāda (13.103)
31. Maitreya-Vyāsa-Saṁvāda (13.120)
32. Sumanākaikeyī-Śāṇḍili-Saṁvāda (13.123)
33. Indra-Viṣṇu-Saṁvāda (13.126)
34. Pavana-Arjuna-Saṁvāda (13.152)

This is a list of the various *saṁvādas* introduced in the Anuśāsana-parvan just for the sake of explaining or elucidating a point asked by Yudhiṣṭhira. Most of the dialogues refer to some problem in ethics or practical religion but rarely to any highly philosophical point. Matters and problems like the beginning of the *śrāddha* rites, the nature of women, caste and its nature, the *brāhmaṇas* who deserve honour, the importance of Viṣṇu, Śiva or importance of *tapas*, *dāna* etc. are discussed in the *parvan* through these dialogues. Moreover, almost every *saṁvāda* is introduced in more or less the same manner, i.e., it is *itihāsa purātana*. It is apparent that the epic writer is here anxious to preserve all the important dialogues, at his time current and popular, by including them here. There is no likelihood of his summarising any previous work or taking only a slice of the same as would be the case if we accept the suggestion made by Dr. Atreya that this *saṁvāda* points to the existence of a work of Vasiṣṭha on philosophy. It is more likely that Vasiṣṭha-Brahmā tradition is a pure myth created to gain authority and antiquity for the teaching of the present V.R. Anyway, the Mbh. *saṁvāda* to me at any rate does not appear as any convincing evidence to prove the existence of any work by Vasiṣṭha on philosophy proper and the dialogue offers no evidence regarding the date of V.R. A critical student is left with the impression that as usual the V.R. in its synthetic spirit is here working on the epic passage. The V.R. has used the Rāmāyaṇa as has been seen in the previous chapter, and now we find that the Mbh. is also made use of. If any conclusions regarding the date of the V.R. are to be arrived at, these will only be that the present V.R. was written at a period when both the epics, Rāmāyaṇa and Mbh., were fully completed. In no case can the existence of the V.R. be pushed to any pre-epic date.

There is another interesting dialogue in the V.R. which also suggests its contact with the Mbh. In the Nirvāṇa Prakaraṇa (a) of the V.R. chapters 117-122 give us the Ikṣvāku-Manu *saṁvāda* which discusses the nature of the world and the way as to how the self can secure release from the *samsṛti-vibhrama*. The Mbh. does not anywhere give us any Ikṣvāku-Manu *saṁvāda* but in one place there is a subtle reference to it and one is justified in presuming the existence of a dialogue giving the instruction of Manu to Ikṣvāku. Thus in the Bhagavadgītā, it is said while giving the *paramparā* of

the *karmayoga* doctrine.

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।

विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥ 4.1

एवं परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।

स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परंतप ॥ 4.2

स एवायं कया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः ।

भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥ 4.3

If we remember that the expression *imam* and the like in the Bhagavadgītā always refer to something that has immediately preceded, or is going to follow immediately, or that in any case the matter referred to is in the Gītā itself, it is clear that *imam* refers to *karmayoga* taught in chapter III. Further the word *proktaḥ* would make it absolutely clear that this *yoga* has been explained in the previous chapter. So the Kṣatriya *karmayoga* doctrine that is taught there is the same as that taught by Manu to Ikṣvāku. The *karmayoga* as taught in the Bhagavadgītā may be very briefly summarised as embracing the following points :

1. Not false renunciation but the performance of *karmas* without *āśakti* and with control over the senses leads to *siddhi*.
2. Renunciation of all *karmas* is logically impossible.
3. The ideal of a person is to be *ātmatrpta* and *ātmani santuṣṭa*.
4. Janaka and Kṛṣṇa are instances of men securing the highest knowledge yet performing work. *Jñāna* need not make one renounce one's work.
5. For a *vidvān* though himself having nothing to gain or to lose, the *loka saṁgraha* is the ideal and he must set the example to the ignorant rest by his selfless action.
6. *Guṇā guṇeṣu vartante* and therefore a wise man should be *nirāśiḥ* and *nirmama* and renounce action in Kṛṣṇa.
7. *Kāma* is the worst enemy and one should kill him by control over the senses.

Turning to the Ikṣvāku-Manu-*saṁvāda* in the V.R., we find that there are three striking similarities in *sarga* 122.

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागी नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ॥ 122.15

तस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च सः ॥ 122.19

न यज्ञतीर्थेन तपप्रदानैरासाद्यते तत्परमं पवित्रम् ।

आसाद्यते क्षीणभवामयानां भक्त्या सतामात्मविदां यदङ्ग ॥ 122.14

Other reminiscences of the Bhagavadgītā are

इक्ष्वाकुरपि तां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य स्थिरोऽभवत् । 122.15

इति मत्वा न शोचति । 120.13-16

In addition to these references which clearly establish the contact of the V.R. *sāmvāda* and the BG. there are other very important doctrinal identities.

1. In keeping with the BG. doctrine of *karmayoga* and remembering the instance of Janaka, Ikṣvāku is advised here as *sattvasthaḥ sukhī rājyanidaṁ praśādhi* (118.13).

2. The BG. simile for the action of *jñāna* on *karman* in the case of the pandits is *jñānāgnidagdha-karmāṇaṁ tam āhu paṇḍitam budhāḥ*. The V.R. has the same idea more poetically expressed in

क्रियमाणा कृता कर्मतूलश्रीर्देहशाल्मलेः ।

ज्ञानानिलसमुद्भूता प्रोद्धीय कापि गच्छति ॥ 120.23b, 24a

3. The description of the *sthitaprajña* in the BG. is no doubt before the author of the V. R. when he describes the man with knowledge, as for instance in the lines :

परानन्दरसाधुब्धो रमते स्वात्मनात्मनि । 122.4

तज्ज्ञः कर्मफलेनान्तस्तथा नायाति रज्जनम् । 122.6

4. The BG. constantly emphasises the ideal of a *sthitaprajña*, a *guṇātīta* or a *bhakta* but rarely enters into any glowing or a detailed description of the *mukta*, a fact which leads one to conclude that the BG. really wants to recommend the ideal of a *bhakta* or a *sthitaprajña* about whom it says *ihaiva tairjitaḥ sargaḥ*, etc. (V.19). The V. R. goes a great step forward in declaring that the *mokṣa* is non-existing or is as unreal as the *bandha* itself and that the ideal is *samatva* as in

इदं रम्यमिदं नेति बीजं ते दुःखसंततेः ।

तस्मिन्साम्याग्निना दग्धे दुःखस्यावसरः कुतः ॥ 119.8

which reminds one of the BG. *samatvam yoga uchyate* (II.48). All this clearly shows that the Ikṣvāku-Manu *sāmvāda* as we have it here, is no doubt based on the BG. *yoga* and here too it need not be supposed that there was any older Ikṣvāku-Manu *sāmvāda* which the V. R. is using; for it is obvious that the V. R. is using

the BG. and has incorporated the BG. doctrine as a part of its own philosophical doctrine using its own poetical style. To prove this one may refer to the strongly Buddhistic or Gauḍapādiya tone of the V. R. passage as in

यथा गन्धर्वनगरं यथा वारि मरुस्थले ।
यत्तु नो दृश्यते किञ्चित्तन्न किञ्चिदिव स्थितम् ॥ 117.10
न बन्धोऽस्ति न मोक्षोऽस्ति ब्रह्मैवास्ति निरामयम् ।
नैक्यमस्ति न च द्वित्वं संवित्सारं विजृम्भते ॥ 117.14
अहमर्थविमुक्तेन भावेनाभावरूपिणा ।
सर्वं शून्यं निरालम्बं चिद्रूपमिति भावयेत् ॥ 119.7
नाप्यशून्यं न शून्यं च नाचिद्रूपं न चिन्मयम् ।
नात्मरूपं नान्यरूपं भुवनं भावयन्मव ॥ 121.11

In addition to these developed philosophical doctrines it is easy to pick up poetical passages in the usual V. R. style, as for instance in

कुचकोटरसंसुप्तं विस्मृत्य जननी सुतम् ।
यथा रोदिति पुत्रार्थं तथात्मार्थमयं जनः ॥ 118.15

or again

कामप्युपगतः शोभां शरदीव नभस्तलम् ।
शशाङ्कशीतलः पूर्णो भाति भासेव भास्करः । 120.23
निर्गच्छति जगज्जालात्पञ्जरादिव केसरी । 122.2
विनाशवाडवाक्रान्तं भीमं काममहार्णवम् ।
जगज्जालतरंगिण्यो यान्ति भूततरंगिकाः ॥ 118.12

and many more of the type. Such passages very clearly indicate the later character of the V. R. as compared with the epic style or with the BG. style. Similarly the doctrine of the seven *yogabhūmikās* as taught in the 120th *sarga* and the clearly *vivarta* analogies in

यथा गन्धर्वनगरं यथा वारि मरुस्थले । 117.10
एकं यथा स्फुरति वारि तरङ्गमङ्गलैः । 117.15
स्फटिकः प्रतिबिम्बेन यथा याति न रञ्जनम् । 122.6

and the peculiar *pratibimba dr̥ṣṭānta* of the V. R. itself as in

तस्मिन्नेव महादर्शे प्रतिबिम्बमुपागता । 117.12

its *spuraṇavāda* as in

भाः स्वभावसमुत्पन्ना ब्रह्मस्फुरणशक्तयः ।
काश्चिद्ब्रह्माण्डतां यान्ति काश्चिद्गच्छन्ति भूतताम् ॥ 117.13

no doubt indicate that it is the V. R. which is working upon an older passage. The *Jñāna-karmayoga* which was taught by Manu to Ikṣvāku and which is referred to in the BG. verses which give the *paramparā* of the yoga is taught in the V. R. against its own philosophical background. As compared with the metaphysical view point of the BG. the view point of the V. R. is clearly Vedāntic and idealistic. In the BG., the Sāṃkhya and the Upaniṣadic Vedānta dominate, while here the very strong influence of Gauḍapāda and Buddhism can be easily seen. So this discussion will also show that the V.R. has worked upon an earlier passage.

The question of the relation of the whole text of the BG. and the V. R. is even more interesting and also very important. Dr. Atreya whose attention was drawn by this problem has to observe as follows :

“In chs. 52-58 of the first half of the Nirvāṇa-Prakaraṇa (VIa) of the V. R. which constitute the Arjunopākhyāna, Vasiṣṭha is represented as teaching to Rāma what Kṛṣṇa would, in future tense, teach Arjuna on the battlefield of the Mbh. war which, Vasiṣṭha says would take place long after. All these chapters comprise 254 verses of the V.R. The philosophy expounded therein is in full harmony with the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha and differs much from the philosophy of the current BG. The verbs used in these chapters are throughout in the future tense—will teach, will happen, etc. It is very strange that out of the seven hundred verses of the BG. only 27 are wholly or partially identical with the verses distributed over these chapters in the V. R. Nothing more is common between the BG. and the V.R. To what this is due it is very difficult to surmise. The orthodox reader will probably hold that, as Vasiṣṭha himself says, the actual teaching of the BG. occurred long after Vasiṣṭha had taught his doctrines to Rāma and that Vasiṣṭha could have known what Kṛṣṇa would teach Arjuna only through his power of pre-cognition and so only in a general way. Had the BG. been already in existence, Vasiṣṭha would have repeated much more of it in his teachings. It is very difficult to accept this view, so long as we find that the philosophy of the BG. is not on the whole identically the same as that taught in these chapters of the V. R. It is the philosophy of the V. R. that Kṛṣṇa is made to teach in the chapters concerned and not that which is presented in the BG. The verses selected from the BG. are only those which can easily fit in with the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha. It may also be possible that the BG.

current at the time of the composition of the V. R. might have been a different one."¹

With due regard to Dr. Atreya, it is to be observed that this is no solution of the problem at all. One might well ask Dr. Atreya as to what he really means by the suggestion that there might have been a different BG. at the time of the composition of the V. R. ? It appears from his remarks that he does not accept the traditional explanation, but then what is his explanation ? What is it that makes the supposition of a different BG. necessary ? Is the textual difference in the verses found by him so materially great as to warrant such a conclusion or does he think that the BG. at some stage of its textual evolution taught the philosophy which the Kṛṣṇa of the Arjuna-pākhyāna is teaching ? To say the least, the entire question is left without any definite conclusion and one might add without complete examination too.

For one finds that the whole text of the V. R. is permeated through and through with the BG. Indeed the V.R. is nothing but a copy, a Vedāntic text modelled on the outline given by the BG. The author of the V.R. had before him the BG. as we do have it now—this is not to say anything about the version of the BG.—a problem connected with the Mbh. text. Neither the traditional explanation or the explanation as suggested by Dr. Atreya deserves acceptance.

To point out as to how the whole text of the V. R. shows the influence of the BG. almost in its every book, below is given a list of places where this influence can be suspected :

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ

I. The Vairāgya Prakaraṇa

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. क्षीणे पुण्ये विशन्त्येतं मर्त्यलोकं च मानवः । 1.39a | IX.21 |
| 2. अवोचन्मां महासत्त्वः सर्वभूतहिते रतः । 2.21b | V.25 |

Note : Words given in bold letters indicate identical words and lines while the asterisk indicates portions based on the BG.

1. After these remarks Dr. Atreya gives a table of the verses common to the BG. and the V. R. and these verses are 25. The Philosophy of the YV., pp. 103-105.

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ

3. सुखदुःखदशाहीनः समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ॥1.7b VI.7,8, XIV.24
 4. किं मे राज्येन किं भोगैः कोऽहं किमिदमागतम् ॥2.15a I.31
 5. आगमापायिनो भावा भावना भवबन्धनी ॥26.22a II.14
 6. सर्वारम्भसमारूढाः सुजना जनकादयः । * III.20
 व्यवहारपरा एव कथमुत्तमतां गताः ॥30.12

II. The Mumukṣu Prakaraṇa

7. अशुभेनाशुभं राम यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥7.20.b XVIII.63
 8. अध्यात्मविद्या तेनेयं पूर्वं राजसु वर्णिता । IX.1-2
 तदनु प्रसृता लोके राजविद्येत्युदाहृता ॥
 राजविद्या राजगुह्यमध्यात्मज्ञानमुत्तमम् ॥11.17-18
 9. एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य दृष्टात्मानः सुबुद्धयः ॥13.1a XIV.9
 10. यत्प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते यदासाद्य न शोचति । XV.5.6
 तत्पदं शेमुषीलभ्यमस्त्येवात्र न संशयः ॥13.34
 11. न शोच्यते पदं प्राप्य न स भूयो हि जायते ॥13.42b XIII.23
 12. यत्करोषि यदश्नासि शमशीतलया धिया ॥13.46a IX.27
 13. न द्वेष्टि संप्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥13.30a XIV.22

III. The Utpatti Prakaraṇa

14. नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ॥1.26;7.36a II.15
 15. अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां प्रधानं तत्कथाश्रयम् ॥6.21a X.32
 16. तच्चित्तास्तद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम्
 कथयन्तश्च तन्नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥9.1 X.9
 17. यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो यस्य बुद्धिर्न लिप्यते ॥9.9a XVIII.17
 18. यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकाश्चोद्विजते च यः ॥9.11a XII.15
 19. अच्येद्योऽहमदाह्योऽहमक्लेद्योऽशेष्य एव च ।
 नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थायुरचलोऽहमिति स्थितम् ॥14.30 II.24
 20. ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान्सुखी ॥24.27a XVI.14

IV. The Sthiti Prakaraṇa

21. सर्वेषणाविमुक्तेन स्वात्मनात्मनि तिष्ठता । * XVIII.11
 कुरु कर्माणि कार्याणि नूनं देहस्य संस्थितिः ॥15.45
 22. यथा यथा यतन्ते ते जीवकाः स्वात्मसिद्धये । *
 तथा तथा भवन्त्याशु विचित्रोपासनक्रमैः ॥

- देवान्देवयजो यान्ति यक्षा यक्षान्त्रजन्ति हि ।
 ब्रह्म ब्रह्मयजो यान्ति यदतुच्छं तदाश्रयेत् ॥19.4-5 IX.25
23. मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव । VII.7
 चित्तं तु नाहमेवेति यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥22.31
24. शरीरनगरीराज्यं कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥23.1b IV.21 ; V.10.13
25. नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ॥31.11a II.16
26. यथा सर्वगतः सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशो नोपलक्ष्यते ।
 तथा निरंशश्चिद्भावः सर्वगोऽपि न लक्ष्यते ॥ * 36.3 XIII.32
27. अज्ञस्यार्धप्रबुद्धस्य सर्वं ब्रह्मेति यो वदेत् । *
 महानरकजालेषु स तेन विनियोजितः ॥39.24 III.26
28. क्षेत्रं शरीरमित्याहुस्तदसौ वेत्त्यखण्डितम् ।
 सबाह्याभ्यन्तरं तेन क्षेत्रज्ञ इति कथ्यते ॥42.22 XIII.1
29. यस्य नेच्छा न वानिच्छा ज्ञस्य कर्मणि तिष्ठतः ।
 न तस्य लिप्यते प्रज्ञा पद्मपत्रमिवाम्बुभिः ॥46.16 V.10
30. क्रियाविशेषबहुला भोगैश्वर्यहताशयाः ।
 नापेक्षन्ते यदा सत्यं न पश्यन्ति शठास्तदा ॥ * 48.1 II.43-44; XVI.12-16
31. निर्ममो निरहंकारः परां शान्तिमुपागतः ॥59.39a II.71
32. एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पुण्या या मयोक्ता महामते ॥59.50 II.72
- V. The Upaśama Prakaraṇa*
33. निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥54.4a II.45
34. विविक्तः शान्तसंकल्पो धीरधीर्विजिताशयः । * 5.46a XVIII.52
35. न ममेह कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ॥10.25a III.18
36. रागद्वेषविनिर्मुक्तः समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ।
 युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी त्यक्तसंसारवासनाः ॥13.43 II.64; VI.8; XIV.24
37. अयं गुणसमाहारो बन्धायैव समाश्रितः ।
 संत्यक्तो भव मोक्षाय यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥14.47 XVIII.63
38. नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ॥18.7a II.57
39. संसारे यदशोच्योऽपि त्वया तातोनुशोच्यते ॥19.29b II.11
40. एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः स्वच्छा निष्कामा विगता मया ।
 एनां प्राप्य महाबाहो विमूढोऽपि न मुह्यति ॥21.8 II.72
41. एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य त्वमप्यभ्युदितो भव ॥29.39b XVI.9

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ

42. त्वयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं जगत्स्थावरजंगमम् ।
 बोधे नित्योदिते शुद्धे सूत्रे मणिगणा यथा ॥29.47 VII.7
43. शान्तोऽपि व्यवहारस्थः कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥35.4 IV.21
44. रेणुनेवाणुना व्योम्नि पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥35.29 V.10
45. यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।
 यः समः सर्वभावेषु जीवितं तस्य राजते ॥39.47 XVIII.17
46. इष्टानिष्टफलं त्यक्त्वा समदर्शनया धिया । *
 वीतरागभयक्रोधो राज्यं समनुपालय ॥41.32 II.56
47. तदुत्तिष्ठ निजं कर्म कुर्वंस्तिष्ठोपशान्तधी । *
 न स्वकर्म विना श्रेयः प्राप्नुवन्तीह मानवाः ॥48.69 II.31; III.35
48. प्रलपन्विसृजन्नुल्लुन्नुन्मिषन्निमिषन्नपि ॥50.29a V.9
49. गुणा गुणार्थे वर्तन्ते प्रकृतौ प्रकृतिः स्थिता ॥53.12a III.28 ; XIV.23
50. श्रोमित्येतत्परं ब्रह्म निर्णीय स मुनिस्तदा ॥54.2 VIII.13
51. कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव दृश्यानि लीयन्ते स्वात्मनात्मनि । *
 अभावितान्येव यदा सत्तासामान्यता तदा ॥55.6 II.58
52. सर्वसङ्गपरित्यागी सममायातु वा गिरौ । * 56.53 XII.16; XIV.25
53. यत्करोति यदश्नाति यद्दाति जुहोति वा *
 न तज्ज्ञस्य न तत्र ज्ञो मा करोतु करोतु वा । *
 कर्मणास्ति न तस्यार्थो नार्थस्तस्यास्त्यकर्मणा । IX.27
 यथास्वभावावगमात्स आत्मन्येव संस्थितः ॥56.62
54. मुक्त इत्युच्यते योगी तुर्यातीतं पदं गतः ॥70.32 VI.8
55. सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी सर्वोपाधिविवर्जितः ।
 सर्वाशासंपरित्यागी जीवन्मुक्त इति स्मृतः ॥74.38 XII.16; XIV.25
56. करोत्यखिलकर्मणि त्यक्तकर्तृत्वविभ्रमः * ॥77.11 XIII.29
57. समकायशिरोग्रीवस्थानकः स महामतिः ॥84.6 VI.13
58. नित्यतृप्तः प्रशान्तात्मा वीतरागो विवासनः । *
 आकाशसदृशाकारस्तज्ज्ञ आत्मनि तिष्ठति ॥49.19 IV.20
59. नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ।
 न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥49.22 III.18
60. गच्छन्मृग्वन्स्पृशन्निघ्नंस्तिष्ठन्नाग्रत्स्वपंस्तथा । * 92.24a V.8
61. कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ॥93.74a V.11
62. यदि तिष्ठसि निर्व्यग्रः कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यसे । * 93.89b IV.21

63. वीतरागभयक्रोधस्तदसङ्गोऽसि राघव । 93.90b II.56
- VI. *The Nirvāṇa Prakaraṇa (a)*
64. यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।
हत्वापि स इमांल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥ 3.19 XVIII.17
65. निःस्नेहदीपवच्छान्तो यस्यान्तर्वासितनाभरः । * 3.21a VI.19
66. भूय एव महाबाहो शृणु मे परमं वचः ।
यत्तेज्जं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया ॥ 6.1 X.1
67. यथा विहरति ज्ञातज्ञेयो जनकभूपतिः । * III.20
आत्मज्ञानाभ्यासपरस्तथा विहर राघव ॥ 11.7
68. स्वयं प्रभुर्महात्मैव ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो विदुः । 11.47a VIII.24
69. भ्रान्तिरस्तं गता नूनं मिहिका शरदीव मे । *
संशान्ताखिलसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥ 12.27 XVIII.73
70. संसारोत्तररो युक्तियोगशब्देन कथ्यते । *
तां विद्धि द्विप्रकारां त्वं चित्तोपशमधर्मिणीम् ॥ 13.3 III.3.; V.2.4.5
आत्मज्ञानं प्रकारोऽस्या एकः प्रकटितो भुवि ।
द्वितीयः प्राणसंरोधः शृणु योऽयं मयोच्यते ॥ 13.4
एको योगस्तथा ज्ञानं संसारोत्तरणक्रमे ।
समावुपायौ द्वावेव प्रोक्तावेकफलप्रदौ ॥ 13.17
71. अव्यक्तवक्ता विज्ञाता निर्ममो निरहंकृतिः ॥ 15.33b II.71
72. यत्करोति यदश्नाति बुद्धयैवालमनुस्मरन् ॥ 25.22a IX.27
73. एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य ये स्थिताः कृतबुद्धयः ॥ 25.25b XVI.9
74. इदमद्य मया लब्धमिदं प्राप्स्यामि सुन्दरम् * ॥ 26.12a XVI.13
75. यत्करोमि यदश्नामि तत्त्यक्त्वा तद्वतोऽपि मे । *
मनो नैष्कर्म्यमादत्ते तेन जीवाम्यनामयः ॥ 26.27 IX.27
76. इदानीं धियमालम्ब्य यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥ 28.5b XVIII.63
77. यथा दीपो निवातरथो स्वात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते । *
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78. पश्यन्ऽहरण्वन्स्पृशन्निघ्नन्नभन्नाच्छन्त्वपन्धसन् ।
प्रलपन्विसृजन्गृह्णन्शुद्धसंविन्मयो भवेत् ॥ 38.26b,27a V.8
79. एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य विचारं कुरु सुव्रत ॥ 43.10b VI.13; XVI.9
80. द्वितीया कलना नास्ति यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥ 49.23b XVIII.63
81. एकप्रत्ययवानन्तः कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यसे ॥ 49.24b V.7

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82. श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च ॥50.4a XV.9
83. सेनाद्वयगतान्दष्ट्वा स्वजनान्मरणोन्मुखान् । *
विषादमेष्यत्युद्योगं युद्धाय न करिष्यति ॥52.34 I.21,24,27,31
84. न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचिन्नायं भूत्वा
भविता वा न भूयः ।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते
हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥52.36 II.20
85. य एनं वेत्ति हन्तारं यश्चैनं मन्यते हतम् ।
उभौ तौ न विजानीतौ नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥52.37 II.19
86. यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।
हत्वापि स इमाल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥53.2 XVIII.17
87. स्वात्मांशैः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि भागशः । *
अहंकारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥53.5 III.27
88. कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।
योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वात्मशुद्धये ॥53.9 V.11
89. निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ।
यः स कार्यमकार्यं वा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥53.12
इदं च ते पाण्डुसुत स्वकर्म क्षात्रमुत्तमम् । * II.31,32,33,71
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अपि कुत्सितमप्यन्यदप्यधर्ममयक्रमम् ।
श्रेष्ठं ते स्वं यथा कर्म तथेहामृतवान्भव ॥53.14
90. योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनंजय ।
निसङ्गस्त्वं यथाप्राप्तकर्मवान्न निबध्यसे ॥53.16 II.48
91. शान्तब्रह्मवपुर्भूत्वा कर्म ब्रह्ममयं कुरु । *
ब्रह्मार्पणसमाचारो ब्रह्मैव भवसि क्षणात् ॥53.17 IV.24; VI.4; IX.28
ईश्वरार्पितसर्वार्थं ईश्वरात्मा निरामयः ।
ईश्वरः सर्वभूतात्मा भव भूषितभूतलः ॥53.18
संन्यस्तसर्वसंकल्पः समः शान्तमना मुनिः ।
संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा कुर्वन्मुक्तमतिर्भव ॥53.19
92. सङ्गत्यागस्य भगवंस्तथा ब्रह्मार्पणस्य च । *
ईश्वरार्पणरूपस्य संन्यासस्य च सर्वशः ॥53.20 XVIII.1; III.3
तथा ज्ञानस्य योगस्य विभागः कीदृशः प्रभो ।
क्रमेण कथयैतन्मे महामोहनिवृत्तये ॥53.21

93. कर्मणां यः फलत्यागस्तं संन्यासं विदुर्बुधाः* ॥53.30b XVIII.2
त्यागः संकल्पजालानामसंसङ्गः स कथ्यते ॥53.31a
94. मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि युक्तवैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥53.34 IX.34;XVIII.65
95. सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।* VI.29,30,31,32
पश्य त्वं योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥53.43
सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं भजत्येकत्वमात्मनः ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥53.44
96. सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।* VI.29,31,32
यः पश्यति तथात्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति ॥53.60
97. निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा श्रद्धात्मनित्या
विनिवृत्तकामाः ।
द्वन्द्वैविमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञैर्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः
पदमव्ययं तत् ॥53.66 XV.5
98. भूय एव महाबाहो इच्छ मे परमं वचः ।
यत्तेऽहं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया ॥54.1
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आगमापायिनो नित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥54.2
99. नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ॥54.7 II.16
100. असंविदन्सुखं दुःखं लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ॥54.20a
लाभालाभसमो भूत्वा भूत्वा नूनं न किञ्चन ॥54.21a II.38
101. यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् । IX.27
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102. यन्मयो यो भवत्यन्तः स तदाप्नोत्यसंशयम् ।* VIII.6
ब्रह्मसत्यमवाप्तुं त्वं ब्रह्मसत्यमयो भव ॥54.23
103. कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्यत्यकर्मणि च कर्म यः । IV.18
स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स चोक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥54.25
104. मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि । II.48
योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनंजय ॥54.26
105. त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः । IV.29
कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः ॥54.28
106. यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः । IV.19

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ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥54.33

107. निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥54.35 II.45

108. कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् । III.6

इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः
स उच्यते ॥54.36

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन । III.7

कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते ॥54.37

109. आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं समुद्रमापः
प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् । II.70

तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे स शान्ति-
माप्नोति न कामकामी ॥54.38

110. न हि शीर्यत्यचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः । IV.20

कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः ॥55.6

111. नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः । II.16

उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥55.12

अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् । II.17

विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित्कर्तुमर्हति ॥55.13

अन्तवन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताः शरीरिणः । II.18

अनाशिनोऽप्रमेयस्य तस्माद्युध्यस्व भारत ॥55.14

112. भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ॥55.18 VII.4

113. श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च । XV.9

गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात् ॥55.21

114. स्थिरां संस्थितिमायान्ति कूर्मोज्झानीव सर्वशः ।* II.58

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यो हृदि यस्य स्वभावतः ॥56.7

115. नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत । XVIII.73

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसंदेहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥58.1

116. एता दष्टिमवष्टभ्य राघवाऽधविनाशिनीम् ।* XVI.9

तिष्ठ निःसङ्गसंन्यासब्रह्मार्पणमयात्मकः ॥59.1

117. एषा गुणमयी माया दुर्बोधेन दुरत्यया ।* 67.7a VII.14

118. एकं सांख्यं च योगं च यः पश्यति स पश्यति । V.5

यत्सांख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं परं योगैस्तदेव हि ॥* 69.21

119. अस्तक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।

नित्यं च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥74.28 XIII.9,10,11

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आत्मनोऽनन्ययोगेन तद्भावमनां रतम् ।

विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि 174.29

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।

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120. साधूनां समदृष्टीनां परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।

IV.34

संगमेन च सा युक्तिर्लभ्यते मुच्यते यया 1187.33

121. नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिलिङ्गश्च त्वप्रसादान्महामुने ।

XVIII.73

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसंदेहो विश्रान्तमतिरात्मवान् 199.1

122. सर्वकर्मफलत्यागी नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।

XVIII.11

न पुण्येन न पापेन लिप्यते नेतरेण च 1122.5

123. तस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च सः 1122.9a

XII.15

124. न यज्ञनीर्थेन तपःप्रदानैरासाद्यते तत्परमं

पवित्रम् ।*

XI.53

आसाद्यते क्षीणभवामयानां भक्त्या सतामात्म-

विदां यदङ्ग 11122.14

125. यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।

IX.27

न कर्तासि न भोक्तासि तत्र मुक्तमतिः शमी 11124.12

126. भोगजाले परिक्षीरो जायन्ते योगिनो भुवि ।

VI.41

शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे गुप्ते गुणवतां सताम् 11126.50

127. योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि निर्वसिनोऽथ मा कुरु 1126.19b

II.48

128. असतः सम्भवो नास्ति नास्त्यभावः सतः सखे ।* 1127.32a

II.16

129. सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि 1128.48b

VI.29

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130. मा कर्मफलबुद्धिर्भूमा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि 11.26

II.47

131. नेह किञ्चित्कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनापि कश्चन 11.33b

III.18

132. त्यागो हि कर्मणां तस्मादादेहं नोपपद्यते ।* 2.42

XVIII.11

133. नासतो विद्यते भावो नामावो विद्यते सतः 13.16, 2a

II.16

134. समूलकर्मसंत्यागेनैव ये शान्तिमास्थिताः ।*

नैव तेषां कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन 13.27

II.47

135. सर्वतः पाणिपादान्तं सर्वतोक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।*

XIII.13,14,15

सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य संस्थितम् 1114.9

सर्वेन्द्रियगुणैर्मुक्तं सर्वेन्द्रियगुणान्वितम् ।

असक्तं सर्वभृच्चैव निर्गुणं गुणभोक्तृ च 1114.10

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

THE BHAGAVĀDGĪTĀ

- बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च ।
सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत् ॥14.11
136. ये परां दृष्टिमायाताः संसृतेः पारदर्शिनः * । II.46
न ते कर्म प्रशंसन्ति कूपं नद्यां वसन्निव ॥22.18
137. तानि संयम्य मनसा युक्त आसीत तत्परः ॥22.20 II.61
138. न तं भिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि न दहन्ति हुताशनाः ।* II.23
न क्लेदयन्ति वारीणि शोषयन्ति न मारुताः ॥29.14
139. कुर्वन्सर्वाणि कर्माणि कूर्माङ्गवदवृत्तिमान् ।* 29.18b II.58
140. नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन । III.18
न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥37.36
141. यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ॥38.37a IX.27
142. या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी । II.69
यस्यां जग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥43.31
143. निर्मानिमोहा जितसङ्गदोषाः ॥100.51a XV.5
144. नाभिवाञ्छति न द्वेष्टि स तदास्ते विवासनः ॥101.33 II.57
145. तस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते तु सः ॥102.9a XII.15
146. नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाऽकृतेनेह कश्चन । III.18
न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥102.37
147. प्रज्ञाप्रासादमारूढस्त्वशोच्यः शोचते
जनान् * ॥102.49a II.11
148. अच्छेद्योऽसावदाह्योऽसावक्लेद्योऽशोष्य
एव च । II.24
नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽसौ सनातनः ॥102.60
149. भूयः कथय तृप्तिर्हि शृण्वतो नास्ति
मेऽमृतम् ॥106.1b X.18
150. संक्षेपेण महाप्राज्ञ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे ॥152.10b X.19
151. स्वयं प्राज्ञोऽसि जानासि यथेच्छसि
तथा कुरु ॥154.15a XVIII.63
152. निर्मानिमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा अध्यात्म-
नित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः । XV.5
- द्वन्द्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञैर्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः
पदमव्ययं तत् ॥154.18
153. बहूनि तव जन्मानि समतीतानि तान्यहम् ।* IV.5

विविधानि विचित्राणि वीर जानामि नो

भवान् ॥157.24

154. तच्चित्तास्तदगतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।* X.9, 10
 कथयन्तश्च तन्नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥163.40
 तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
 जायते बुद्धियोगोऽसौ येन ते यान्ति तत्पदम् ॥163.41
155. भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च । VII.4
 अहंकार इतीदं तत्तच्छिलाङ्गमुदाहृतम् ॥166.35
156. या निशा सर्वभूतानामविद्यास्तमयात्मिका ।* II.69
 परो बोधः परा शान्तिस्तत्रासौ सममास्थितः ॥169.16
 यस्मिञ्जाग्रति भूतानि दृश्येऽस्मिन्दुःखदायिनी ।
 तत्रासौ सततं सुमस्तन्न पश्यत्यसौ सुखी ॥169.17
157. आनादिमत्परं ब्रह्म न सद्यन्नासदुच्यते ॥188.21a XIII.12
158. सहस्रेभ्यः सहस्रेभ्यः कश्चिदुत्थाय वीर्यवान् ।*194.39a VII.3
159. भूय एव महाबाहो शृणु मे परमं वचः ।204.1a X.1
160. अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तवीर्यं ॥208.30a XI.19
161. नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।213.10a II.16
162. नष्टो मोहः पदं प्राप्तं त्वत्प्रसादान्मुनीश्वर । XVIII.73
 संपन्नोऽहमहं सत्यमत्यन्तमवदातधीः ॥214.14
 स्थितोऽस्मि गतसंदेहः स्वभावे ब्रह्मरूपिणि ।
 निरावरणविज्ञानः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥214.15
163. समदुःखसुखो धीरः सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ।54.4b VI.a II.15

This list of the passages where the BG. has influenced the V. R. will make it clear that the author of the V.R. had before him much the same text as we have it now, for all these common verses come from almost all the eighteen chapters of the BG. and are not merely verses which fit in easily with the philosophy, as Dr. Atreya thinks. In fact the impression that one gets after a critical study of the V.R. Arjunopākhyāna is that the author of the V.R. had the entire text and the philosophy of the BG. before him and that he has made a very clever use of the same. Thus, the author knows fully well and thoroughly the doctrine of *karmayoga* as well as the ideal of the *sthitaprajña*. Leaving aside the whole text of the V.R. even the

Arjunopākhyāna on which only, Dr. Atreya bases his remarks proves this. Thus the words *viṣādameṣyati* in 34.52 clearly refer to the *viṣāda-yoga* of the BG. Then in 36-39 follows the doctrine of immortality and indestructibility of the Self as taught in the second chapter. In the next V.R. verses is given the doctrine of *karmayoga* and the conquest of the *ahamkāra* and the *arpaṇa* of the *karmas* in the *īśwara*, 1-19.53, a topic which is discussed in chs. II, III and IX of the BG. In V.R. 20-21.53 are asked again questions regarding the nature and method of *saṁgatyāga*, *brahmārpaṇa*, *sannyāsa* and the difference between *jñāna* and *yoga* and there is no difficulty in finding out the almost systematic discussion of all these topics in the several chapters of the BG., particularly in the eighteenth chapter. The description of the *sthitaprajña*, and the recommendation of *yoga* also clearly reveal the contact of the V.R. and the BG.

But then which of the two, the BG. or the V.R. Arjunopākhyāna is the earlier? Does the different teaching of the V.R. warrant a supposition of a different BG. before the author or at his time? As a matter of fact the question does not arise at all, for the answer is very simple. The V.R. has used the present BG. and made it fit in its philosophy. These two differ if their metaphysics is considered. The BG. is full of the Sāṁkhya and the Yoga philosophy with a very strong current of the early Upaniṣadic Vedānta. According to authorities like Garbe the fusion of the Sāṁkhya and the Vedānta in the BG. is obvious. The Sāṁkhya and the Vedānta being the most popular doctrines of the times and the theistic tendency being in the ascendency, it is no wonder that the Pāñcarātra or the Bhāgavata text tries a fusion of the three tendencies and gives us a metaphysics in which the Sāṁkhya *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* have an *adhyakṣa* in Kṛṣṇa or the Vedānta Brahman which has Kṛṣṇa as its *pratiṣṭhā* or the ground. The Vedānta that BG. teaches is the early Vedānta as it does not teach the doctrine of *vivarta* at all. The word *māyā* no doubt occurs in the text some five times but nowhere has it the later Vedānta connotation. Authorities like Edgerton¹ are quite certain that the BG. teaches the orthodox Vedānta and leans more to the side of the Upaniṣads like the Kaṭha, Śvetāśva, etc. and that the important word like the *māyā* also is used in the manner of the

1. Franklin Edgerton, The Bhagvadgītā, p. 52, 18 fn.

Upaniṣads. Regarding the ethical teaching also the BG. follows and develops the doctrine of the Īśāvāsyā as it teaches the fusion of *jñāna*, *karma* and *bhakti* whereas the Īśāvāsyā teaches the harmony of *jñāna* and *karma*. The V.R. on the other hand is a text written at a pretty late date when the Sāṃkhya doctrine was no longer in the field and the early Vedānta, the Upaniṣadic Vedānta, had given place to the Vedānta of Gauḍapāda. The Vedānta that the V.R. has drawn upon, is the Vedānta which has a very strong Buddhistic flavour in it. The BG. is remarkably free from the *vivarta dṛṣṭāntas* while the V.R. is replete with them; even the Arjunopākhyāna is full of these *dṛṣṭāntas*. The BG. is a Pāñcarātra text and accepts the worship of Kṛṣṇa as the highest form of worship while giving only a second preference to other forms of worship of other deities. The words Maheśwara and Viṣṇu occur only once in the text but these in no way indicate any reference to the different Śaiva and Vaiṣṇavaite cults which play so very important part in the later Hinduism. The V.R. on the other hand does fully recognise these forms which are given a very prominent place and these cults are set in the frame of its own Vedānta philosophy. Thus Śiva or Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa teach only the V.R. philosophy. The famous Śakti doctrine also comes in for this fusion. Thus it is clear that the V.R. also is a synthesis of the various philosophical thoughts current and popular at its time much in the same way as the BG. is a synthesis of its contemporary thought. In other words the V.R. is completely modelled on the BG. The V.R. accepts the ethical teaching of the BG., for it also everywhere teaches the *sāmya* of the mind and the performance of one's own duty. Rāma is given the same advice which Arjuna has been given by Kṛṣṇa. It is only the metaphysics where the V.R. materially differs from the BG. and this is as it should be; for both the texts attempt a synthesis of their respective contemporary thoughts.

There is, however, one important point to be kept in mind about the two texts. Both are Brahmanical texts meant to meet and overcome the Buddhistic opposition. In both are to be seen attempts at a synthesis and for a revival of the Brahmanical thought. The BG. accepts the Bhikkhu ideal and gives it a religious conviction of theism which has been blended with the Sāṃkhya and the Vedānta. The V.R. also does the same—accepts the Bhikkhu ideal and gives it the idealistic Vedāntic conviction. To put it in other words, the BG.

is more a text on ethics while the V.R. is a text dealing with metaphysics. This is to be expected, for the very occasions which are selected for the two texts have the germs of this fundamental difference. Both the authors choose the Epic heroes and teachers for their purpose. In the BG. the author has gone to the Mbh. and selects the occasion when the two armies are encamped against each other. The conches are being blown to announce the commencement of the war; Arjuna's chariot is taken to the very centre of the battle-field as he wants to have a look at his opponents who are mostly his teachers and kith and kin. A strange dejection overpowers him and laying down his weapons he declares to Kṛṣṇa, his friend, philosopher and guide, his decision not to fight. He has grave doubts regarding the wisdom of the Pāṇḍavas' action of going to war with their own blood relatives and thinks that the benefits of the war would be far insignificant when weighed against the calamities that would follow the war. In brief, as a human being he is unnerved at the prospect of being required to kill his dear and near relatives and from this arises the problem of his neglecting his duties as a warrior and being disgusted with the greedy world and its mad way and thus thinking of *sannyāsa*. Kṛṣṇa taking advantage of the situation begins an almost thorough discussion about the soul, the problem of *karman* and the futility of *sannyāsa*. He then teaches his famous doctrine of *karmayoga* and *bhakti*. In the V.R. too Rāma, the other Epic hero, of no less renown than Arjuna in war, is possessed of *vairāgya* in war and thinks of *sannyāsa* in complete disregard of his duties. Yet there is a very great difference in the *vairāgya* of these two heroes. Rāma in the V.R. has visited all the *tīrthas*. He leaves Ayodhyā as a valiant prince trained in all the arts and returns a dejected man almost a second Buddha. Viśvāmitra appears and wants to take away Rāma for the protection of his sacrifices which are being constantly obstructed by the demons. It is Rāma's duty to help Viśvāmitra by fighting with the demons as it is the duty of Arjuna to fight. But both are lost in the *vyāmoha-sāgara*. Arjuna's problem is more concerned with *karma* and *akarma*; he is filled with *parā-krpā*; primarily thinks of the loss and death of his relatives, *svajana-hatyā*, *kulakṣaya*, *varṇa-saṁkara* and *utsāda* of *jātidharmas* and *kuladharmas* and therefore prefers death rather than taking the responsibility of such a ghastly tragedy. Rāma's problem is more fundamental and is not as spontaneous as

that of Arjuna. Rāma thinks of *lakṣmī-nirākaraṇa*, *jīvita-garha*, *ahamkāra-jugupsā*, *citta-daurātmya*, *tṛṣṇā-bhaṅga*, *kāya-jugupsā*, *bālya-jugupsā*, *yauvana-garhā*, *strī-jugupsā*, *jarā-jugupsā*, *kālavilāsa*, *kṛtānta-vilasita*, *daiva-durvilāsa* and *anityatā-pratipādana*. Rāma is a boy of sixteen and at that age he has this philosophical maturity. The V.R. shows the influence of Buddhist philosophy and its idealism is of the same type as that found in Gauḍapāda. On the other hand the BG. has no trace of this idealism and in fact the verse *asatyam apratiṣṭham* etc. is a frank condemnation of this type of idealism. Thus the two works are Brahmanical attempts at a synthesis of the contemporary thought to improve and revive the Brahmanical culture and philosophy. The two texts are separated by many a century and the V.R. is a frank imitation of the BG. It has accepted the BG. as its model and borrows from it so many phrases and ideas which are scattered throughout the entire text and of which it gives a very clever summary mixed with its own doctrine. In fact it is clear that the author of the V.R. is thoroughly familiar with the Mbh. and is making free use of its episodes and incidents and in the same strain he has used the BG. It is not unlikely that he was inspired for his work by the BG. It is the BG. which is constantly before him as his phraseology which is almost saturated with the BG. would undoubtedly prove. A critical student of the two texts is reminded of the BG. at almost each and every stage in the V.R. But the V.R. adds much more and is far more poetic. So it is a later text modelled on the BG.

The same fact has been made use of by Dr. Atreya to arrive at different conclusions. The conclusions are not supported by the evidence that one is able to get from the two texts. On the other hand Dr. Raghavan has used this very evidence in a very clever manner to determine the date of the V.R. and the land of its origin. In his article, 'The V.R. and the BG. and the place of origin of the V.R.' published in the J.O.R., Madras (Vol. XIII, pp. 73-82), he adds first many more parallels to those pointed out by Dr. Atreya and then observes: "The V.R. which uses the BG. extensively, uses a text of the BG. which is the Kāśmīrian version crossed by the Vulgate. According to Dr. Schrader the Vulgate of the BG. was still unknown in Kāśmīr by the end of the 10th century.¹ Dr. Schrader says² that the

1. The Kāśmīrian Recension of the BG., p. 8

2. Ibid., p. 2

Vulgate intruded into Kāśmīr and made the Kāśmīr text slowly extinct in the 14th century, and that in the 12th century, Yogarāja quotes the Vulgate. Since the currency of the Kāśmīr text is unknown outside Kāśmīr and since the V.R. knows that text, the place where the V.R. was produced must be the land of Kāśmīr. And since the Kāśmīr text known to the V.R. already shows the inroads of the Vulgate, it follows that the V.R. was compiled after the 10th century A.D. This brings the upper limit down by a century. In his own study of the problem Dr. Raghavan remarks, "In the BG. passages used by the V.R. and especially

मत्तोऽवधार्य पुत्र त्वं यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु । I.1.18
 स्वात्मांशैः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि भागशः ।
 अहंकारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥ VI.a.53.5
 कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।
 योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वात्मशुद्धये ॥ VI.a.53.9
 कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्यत्यकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।
 स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स चोक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥ VI.a.54.25
 श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च ।
 गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात् ॥ VI.a.55.21
 इन्द्रियाणि पतन्त्यर्थं भ्रष्टं गृध्र इवामिषम् ।
 तानि संयम्य मनसा युक्त आसीत तत्परः ॥ VI.6.22.20
 या निशा सर्व भूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
 यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥ VI.6.43.41

the V.R. presents three instances of Kāśmīri readings, i.e.,

स्वात्मांशैः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि भागशः ।
 अहंकारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥ VI.a.53.5
 इन्द्रियाणि पतन्त्यर्थं भ्रष्टं गृध्र इवामिषम् ।
 तानि संयम्य मनसा युक्त आसीत तत्परः ॥ VI.6.22.30
 कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्यत्यकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।
 स बुद्धिमान्यनुष्येषु स चोक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥ VI.9.54.25

while four instances of the Vulgate readings. From this circumstance it is clear that the V.R. used a text which was becoming a mix-up of the two recensions. While we know that the Vulgate invaded Kāśmīr and its readings were getting into the Kāśmīri text, we do not know

whether the Vulgate was ever influenced by the Kāśmīri text. The provenance of a mixed text like this can be only Kāśmīr and not any other place. Hence the suggestion that Kāśmīr was the place where the V.R. was produced deserves acceptance. This fact of the V.R. using a Kāśmīr text crossed by the Vulgate defines a time-limit also for the V.R.” We will turn to the problem of the home and time of the V.R. later but it will be clear from this that the BG. was before the author of the V.R. and that there is no reason whatsoever for supposing that he had a different BG. Similarly there is no reason whatsoever to suggest the antiquity of the V.R. to the BG. Almost from all the eighteen chapters of the BG. as we have it now the V.R. has lifted phrases, verse-portions only to work with readymade material, its very fine text. The V.R. is almost soaked in the BG. and has taken liberties with it as it has done with other earlier works.

It would be a mistake if it is supposed for a while that the V.R. knows thoroughly only the BG. and not the rest of the Epic. In fact the author has a perfect mastery over the Epic idiom and almost on every page there occur verses, lines or verse-endings highly reminiscent of the Epic. The style every where is strongly influenced both by Vālmīki and Vyāsa. It is often obvious that the author of the V.R. is consciously following if not imitating the Epic. Vyāsa and Mahābhārata are frequently referred to. To point out a few places :

- इमं व्यासमुनिं तत्र द्वात्रिंशं संस्मराम्यहम् ॥ II.3.21
 क्रमेणास्य मुनेरित्थं व्यासस्याद्भुतकर्मणः ।
 संलक्ष्यतेऽवतारोऽयं दशमो दीर्घदर्शिनः ॥ II.3.26
 भूयोऽपि भारतं नाम सेतिहासं करिष्यति ॥ II.3.29
 राजा चादौ विवेकेन योजनीयः सुमन्त्रिणा ।
 तेनार्यतामुपायाति यथा राजा तथा प्रजाः ॥ III.78.39
 राजसूयस्य कर्तारो ये हि ते द्वादशाब्दिकम् ।
 श्रापद्दुःखं प्राप्नुवन्ति नानाकारव्यथामयम् ॥ III.116.5
 उर्ध्वबाहुर्विरौम्येष न च कश्चिच्छृणोति मे । V.5.26
 द्वितीयमेतस्य समं भारतं नाम नामतः ।
 स्मरामि प्राक्तनव्यासकृतं जगति विस्मृतम् ॥ VI.a.22.26
 व्यासाभिधेन जीवेन तेनैवान्येन वा कृतम् ।
 एतत्तु सप्तमं वारं क्रियते विस्मृतिं गतम् ॥ VI.a.22.27

जिष्णुयुक्तेन गुप्तेन विष्णुपाण्डवकौरवैः ।

कचिद्भारतयुद्धेन निहताक्षौहिणीगणम् ॥ VI.b.46.48

In addition to these references there are many other references to the stories and incidents from the Epic as for instance, the story of Māṇḍavya in III. 92.21, Māyāsura in III. 100.3; the story of Saṁvartta and the sacrifice of Marutta in IV.33.4; the story of Śibi in VI.b.198.28; and finally the story of the Epic itself in VI.b.52.28-35. It is very likely that like Bāṇa the V.R. also refers to the Epic being read in III.104.25.

इतिहासमये पुण्ये वाच्यमाने च पुस्तके । III.104.25

All this will very clearly indicate the very close relation that exists between the Mahābhārata and the V.R. There is another very clear indication of the fact that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is to be placed considerably after the two Epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata. The doctrine of *avatāra* plays a very important part in the Epic and the post-Epic Hindusim. The doctrine is traced by scholars in the Ṛgvedic hymns to Viṣṇu yet it finds its first expression in the Bhagavadgītā. Kṛṣṇa in the BG. says that he has a definite part to play in the interest of the world and comes down out of sheer kindness and concern for the well-being of humanity. Further Kṛṣṇa is an *avatāra* of Brahman and not of Viṣṇu, for yet Viṣṇu is to rise in power. Kṛṣṇa's *avatāra* is out of a feeling of a concern but in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa the *avatāra* as Rāma is due to several curses. The Epics are making an effort to identify Rāma and Kṛṣṇa with Viṣṇu but such curses are not mentioned in them as the causes. It is the Uttarakāṇḍa 51.11-18 which mentions the curse of Bhṛgu as the cause but this too as Dr. Sukathankar has shown is due to the Bhṛguite revision of the Epics in which they introduced the stories showing their own prowess and greatness. In fact the Bhṛgu went to the length of turning one Bhārgava in an *avatāra*, Paraśurāma. In the Epics it is usual to regard the portions as later if this identification with Viṣṇu is attempted.

In the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa several curses are mentioned and a knowledge of the fully developed Viṣṇu mythology is clearly indicated. V.14.26, VI.b.86.44,48, V.30.43 are significant places in this context. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa refers to this popular notion of *avatāra* but itself does not believe in it. It is exceptionally bold in saying that

it was *amaṅgala tṛṣṇā* that turned Viṣṇu into Vāmana V.15.1.19.

तृष्णयाशयकौशिक्या हृद्यमङ्गलभूतया ।

रूढया भगवानेष विष्णुर्वामनतां गतः । V.15.19

The pun on the word *vāmanatā* and the contrast intended in *bhagavāna* and *vāmantā* cannot be overlooked. The BG. on the overhand constantly denies any *tṛṣṇā* on the part of Kṛṣṇa but the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa sees *tṛṣṇā* in Viṣṇu even.

In this context another point to be remembered is the respect shown to Śākyamuni by the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. He is perhaps greater than the *avatāra*; for he is the ideal of Rāma, the *avatāra* recognised; I.15.8, I.29.39, VI.a.93.61 are very clear references where the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has shown its regard for Buddha. The attempts of the commentator to explain the word *buddha* as a *prabuddha-tattva-puruṣa* in a general manner or the addition of *vedabāhyatvāt atinīcenāpi sākyena* are absolutely without any authority. The leanings of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa towards Buddhism and its very high regard for Buddha are too obvious.

The Purāṇas¹ too regard Buddha as an *avatāra*. The Mahābhārata Nārāyaṇīya ākhyāna, 12339; 77, 90; 104, 12; 349, 37 gives the list of the *avatāras* of Viṣṇu but Buddha is not mentioned while the Harivaṁśa 2.69 mentions Buddha. The Vāyu Purāṇa does not mention Buddha as an *avatāra* in 98.71 but the Varāha and Agni mention and give directions about the images of Buddha. The Matsya Purāṇa mentions Buddha as an *avatāra*. The Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā of the Pāñcarātras mentions 39 Vibhāvas or Avatāras of Viṣṇu and the word *śāntātman* refers to Buddha. In East Bengal the Tangibadi sculpture of Viṣṇu's *avatāras* contains the image of Buddha. Kamala Rāy² shows that from 320 to 455A.D. epigraphical evidence reveals that Buddha was regarded as an *avatāra*. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa I.3,6-25; I.9,4,3 everywhere mentions Buddha in the list of the *avatāras*. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa knows the *avatāra* theory fully developed but has no faith in it. Its inclinations are with Buddhism. From this it is clear that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa stands towards the close of the Purāṇic period as its knowledge of the Purāṇic mythology

1. I am indebted to Prof. N. G. Gore for this information (his letter published in the Kesari, Poona).
2. Indian Historical Quarterly, XVII, pp.370-85

reveals but stands outside the Purāṇic Brahmanical circle as it glorifies Buddha. It knows all the Purāṇas with their different versions, for these are referred to in

एकार्यानि समग्राणि बहुपाठानि मेऽनघ ।

पुराणानि प्रवर्तन्ते प्रसृतानि युगं प्रति ॥ VI.a.22.20

It is to be remembered in this context that sometimes the Purāṇas regard Buddha as an *avatāra* but also responsible for Moha-śāstras. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa tendency is obviously different.

Hopkins in his work¹ has hinted that the *tīrtha* stories could be a test for what is earlier and later. If the list of the *tīrthas* in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is compared with that from the Mahābhārata Anu. 102, 45-48, then it will be clear that the *tīrthas* mentioned in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa are many more than those in the Mbh. The reference to the 64 places of Hari and Hara shows the cult fully developed. In the Mahābhārata, one sees the famous Prabhāsa in its glory and constantly referred to but the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa does not refer to it.

1 The Great Epic of India, p.83

CHAPTER III

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND SANSKRIT CLASSICAL LITERATURE

The relation that appears to exist between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the two Epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata has already been discussed and now we can turn to the study of the relation of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa with Sanskrit classical literature. If in foregoing chapters an attempt was made to find out and determine the relation of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa with the Bardic poetry of ancient India, an attempt is now being made to find out and determine the relation between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the *belles lettres* and artistic poetry of ancient India. Not only is this problem very interesting but it is of vital importance for the solution of many a problem connected with this text and more particularly such a study throws a considerable light on the probable date of the work.

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa describes itself as a *kāvya* in II. 18.32, 33

बुद्ध्वेदमखिलं शास्त्रं वाचयित्वा विविच्यताम् ।

अनुभूयत एवेतन्न तूक्तं वरशापवत् ॥ 18.32

शास्त्रं सुबोधमेवेदं सालंकारविभूषितम् ।

काव्यं रसमयं चारु दृष्टान्तैः प्रतिपादितम् ॥ 18.33

and the claim is absolutely just as indeed very large sections of the work are written in the *kāvya* style. There is not the slightest doubt that the author is a great poet. Dr. Raghavan remarks "The author is an undoubted master both of vocabulary and imagery and though there are repetitions in it, his literary manner is comparable to that of Bāṇa and Bhavabhūti for the profuseness of imagination and expression. While none can deny him originality and poetic power, it is all the same clear that he was one who was widely acquainted not only with *kāvyas* and *nāṭakas* but also with *Alaṃkāra* works, and as one soaked in the poetic and dramatic masterpieces of Sanskrit literature, the author now echoes some master, now works into his verse a figure or a description from some poem or a drama, and now uses wholesale

a verse from other's writings. A thorough examination of this aspect of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa helps to a great extent the task of arriving at an earlier limit to the date of the work. Dr. Atreya has no doubt examined this aspect, but his investigation is meagre and tainted by his assumptions. He notes parallels between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and Kālidāsa, Bhartṛhari, Bhavabhūti and Bhāravi, but assumes that it is with reference to Kālidāsa alone that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is the borrower, and that with reference to the other poets, they borrowed from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Further, there are more passages common to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and these poets than Dr. Atreya has noted, and there are passages common to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and more poets than Dr. Atreya has marked."¹ Dr. Raghavan then notes the parallels between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the poets like Kālidāsa, Bhāravi, Mātṛgupta, Bāṇa, Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa, Bhartṛhari, Bhavabhūti, Ānandavardhana, Rājaśekhara and Abhinanda. An attempt is made here to make the study of this aspect of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as complete as possible.

This study of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa reveals only one fact, that its author was nothing short of a genius. To weave all this material so dexterously into his vast philosophical poem is no ordinary work. There is no doubt as to the fact that he is a conscious artist and that his work is no mean plagiarism. It has been already shown that the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has tried to embellish the accounts of even the Ādikavi—Vālmīki. Dr. Dasgupta remarks, "The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is throughout a philosophical work in the form of popular lectures and the same idea is often repeated again and again in various kinds of expression and poetical imagery. But the writer seems to have been endowed with extraordinary poetical gifts. Almost every verse is full of the finest poetical imagery; the choice of words is exceedingly pleasing to the ear, and they often produce the effect of interesting us more by their poetical value than by the extremely idealistic thought which they are intended to convey."² Swami Ramatirtha has spoken of the 'true and real poetry' of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Dr. Atreya describes the style of the author as 'popular but literary.' Every one who has read the work has spoken very highly

1. J. O. R., Vol. XIII, part II, pp. 110-128

2. A History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, p. 231

of the poetical qualities of the work.

The author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is himself quite conscious of his abilities as well as the merit of his work. Time and again he makes statements which clearly reflect these facts. Attention may be drawn to II.18.33 which has been quoted already where he describes his work as a *rasamayam cāru kāvyam* and *subodham* and *sālamkāra-vibhūṣitam*. Elsewhere he uses the phrase *vacanam rasātiriktam*. II.18.33 is true to a letter and there is no exaggeration in it at all. The author's inimitable style is the result of his wonderful command over the Sanskrit Language coupled with a poetical genius and a very fertile imagination. He is a real student not only of philosophy but also of *kāvya* literature and as an ambitious poet he has followed the dictum of Mammaṭa thoroughly. In his case

शक्तिनिपुणता लोके शास्त्रकाव्याद्यवेक्षणात् ।

काव्यज्ञशिक्षयाम्यास इति हेतुस्तदुद्भवे ॥¹

has come true. He has studied the acknowledged masters and without any effort can quote them and he has so thoroughly assimilated them that even his own lines resemble the utterances of this or that master. His memory and innate sense of propriety are so quick and alert that on occasions he thinks of a line from a master but introduces in it suitable and clever changes which the occasion demands. His study of the predecessors certainly plays a very important part in the making up of his literary style. He is thoroughly acquainted with the *śāstra* of literature also. References to *dhvani*, *rasa*, *abhinaya* and *nāṭaka* are many. Regarding his style, Dr. Raghavan notes a few peculiarities, "The author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is a slave of the word *camatkāra* or *camatkṛti*; there is hardly any canto or page where expressions like *cit-camatkāra* or *cit-camatkṛti* do not occur. The history of this word also points to a period later than Anandavardhana. Another striking point is that the descriptive passages of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa are full of all sorts of onomatopoeic words like *guḍaguḍārava*, *ghumughumu*, *caṭaccaṭat*, *pacapacaśabda*, *kucukucu*, *chamicchami*, *dhagdhagat*, *raṭaraṭārava* *kaṭkaṭārava*, *paṭapaṭaśabda*. Such a vocabulary is not common in the age of Sanskrit literature prior to Bāṇa and Bhavabhūti; even in these writers there is not such

a spate of these expressions as in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. The style revelling in these words must be much later than Bāṇa.”

1. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND BHĀSA

In III.29 we have a faint echo of the lament of King Udayana as reported by the Brahmacārin in the Svapnavāsavadattam (Act I). Thus the verse is :

इह देवि मया भुक्तमिहोषितमिह स्थितम् ।

इह सुप्तमिहापीतमिह दत्तमिहाहृतम् । III.29.20

and Bhāsa's lines are

‘इह तया सह हसितम्, इह तया सह कथितम्, इह तया सह पर्युषितम्, इह तया सह कुपितम्, इह तया सह शयितम्’ इत्येव विलपन्तं राजानममात्यैर्महता यत्नेन तस्माद् ग्रामात् गृहीत्वापक्रान्तम् । Act I, lines 2-4 & verse 15.

Both these occur in the context of lamentations and the similarity in the phrasing of the lament is obvious.

2. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND ŚŪDRAKA

In two places, VI.a.106.36 and VI.b.118.1, one is reminded of the Mṛcchakaṭika of Śūdraka. The name Madanikā is in all likelihood inspired by the famous character Madanikā in the play. Thus :

अहं मदनिका नाम मार्यास्मि तव मानद । VI.a. 106.36

refers to Madanikā and

निर्गुणस्य बकस्यास्य गुण एकोऽस्ति दृश्यताम् ।

यत्प्रावृषं स्मारयति प्रावृट् प्रावृडिति ब्रुवन् ॥ VI.b. 118.1

reminds one of Śūdraka's

तार्त्तिक प्रोक्षितमर्तुवध्यपटहो हा हा हताशो बकः ।

प्रावृट् प्रावृडिति ब्रवीति शठधीः क्षारं क्षते प्रक्षिपन् ॥ V.18

The similarity of the words *prāvṛṣṭ* *prāvṛṣṭi* *bravīti* is obvious. VI.b.120.14

हेमसान्वासनस्थोऽग्रथो वातव्याधितटोऽम्बुदः ।

तडितपीताम्बरं घत्ते क्षुब्धं हरिरिबोद्भवः । VI.b.120.14

is again similar to Mṛcchakaṭika, V.2

मेघो जलाव्रमहिषोदरमृङ्गनीलो

विद्यत्प्रभारचितपीतपटोत्तरीयः ।

आभाति संहतबलाकगृहीतशङ्खः
खं केशवोऽपर इवाक्रमितुं प्रवृत्तः । V.2

the ideas of *vidyut* as *pitāmbara* and the cloud as *hari* being common.

3. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND KĀLIDĀSA

Dr. Atreya observes that Kālidāsa's Meghadūta is summarised by the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in VI.b.119.2-5. Thus :

अस्याः प्राग्भवसत्पतिः स मुनिना शापेन वृक्षीकृतो
वर्षद्वादशकं तदेव गणयन्त्यैव सात्र स्थिता । VI.b.116.32
कथयत्येष पथिकः पश्य मन्दारगुल्मके ।
प्रियायाश्चिरलब्धाया वृत्तां विरहसंकथाम् ॥ VI.b.119.1
दातुं त्वन्निकटे दूतमहं चिन्तान्वितोऽवदम् । VI.b.119.26
अस्मिन्महाप्रलयकालसमे वियोगे ।
यो मां तयेह मम याति गृहं स कः स्यात् ।
नैवास्त्यसौ जगति यः परदुःखशान्त्यै
प्रीत्या निरन्तरतरं सरलं यतेत ॥ VI.b.119.3
आ एष शिखरे मेघः स्मराभ्य इव संयुतः ।
विद्युल्लताविलासिन्या वलितो रसिकः स्थितः ॥ VI.b.119.4
भ्रातर्मैघ महेन्द्रचापमुचितं व्यालम्ब्य कण्ठेगुणं
नीचैर्गर्जं मुहूर्तकं कुरु दयां सा बाष्पपूर्णक्षणा ।
बाला बालमृणालकोमलतनुस्तन्वी न सोढुं क्षमा
तां गत्वा सुगते गलज्जललवैराश्रासयात्मानिलैः ॥ VI.b.119.5
चित्ततूलिकया व्योम्नि लिखित्वालिङ्गिता सती ।
न जाने काधुनैवेतः पयोद दयिता गता ॥ VI.b.119.6

clearly remind one of the famous poem of Kālidāsa and the similarity in thought and expression is striking. Dr. Atreya refers to Meghadūta I.1,2,4,7 and II.38,45 and 55 as the parallel passages.

Again Dr. Atreya points out that the author has borrowed from the Kumārasambhava also. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.16.50

अथ तामतिमात्रविह्वलां सकृपाकाशभवा सरस्वती ।
शफरीं हृदशोषविह्वलां प्रथमा वृष्टिरिवान्वकम्पत ॥ III.16.50

is almost identical with Kumārasaṁbhava IV.4, 39

अथ सा पुनरेव विह्वला । IV.4
इति देहविमुक्तये स्थिताम्
रतिमाकाशभवा सरस्वती ।
शफरीं हृदशोषविह्वलां
प्रथमा वृष्टिरिवान्वकम्पत ॥ IV.39

Dr. Raghavan has pointed out some more passages common to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and Kālidāsa.¹ Thus the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, I.27.16

विडम्ब्यते भिन्नरुचिर्हि लोकः । I.27.16d

is identical with the Raghuvamśa VI.30d

नासौ न काम्यो न च वेद सम्यग्द्रष्टुं न सा भिन्नरुचिर्हि लोकः । VI.30d.

Other identical lines are the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa

सोऽपश्यत्प्रणिधानेन तत एकान्तसंस्थितः । VI.b.14.7

and the Raghuvamśa which is

सोऽपश्यत्प्रणिधानेन संततेः स्तम्भकारणम् । I.74.

Similarly the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa

निपीतोऽर्णवतीरेषु नालिकेररसासवः । VI.b.109.16b

reminds one of the Raghuvamśa

ताम्बूलीनां दलैस्तत्र रचितापानभूमयः ।

नारीकेलासवं योधाः शात्रवं च पपुर्यशः ॥ IV.42

Dr. Raghavan further points out the similarity between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VI.b.115.32

नररसायनवृत्तिविमुक्तया प्रमदया मदयापितलज्जया ।

उपगते वपुषा न विषह्यते विषविमूर्च्छनयेव समायता ॥ VI.b.115.32

and the Raghuvamśa IX.31

उपहितं शिशिरापगमश्रिया मुकुलजालमशोभत किशुके ।

प्रणयिनीव नखक्षतमण्डनं प्रमदया मदयापितलज्जया ॥ IX.31

1. J. O. R., Madras, Vol. XIII, part II, pp. 111-112

From the Śākuntala also the poet has lifted. Thus the V.R., II.2.19

निर्मले मुकुरे वक्त्रमयत्नेनैव बिम्बति । II.2.19

is the Śākuntala VII.32

छाया न मूर्च्छति मलोपहतप्रसादे
शुद्धे तु दर्पणतले सुलभावकाशा ॥ VII.32.

Dr. Raghavan has noted additional parallel passages between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the Meghadūta and the Kumārasaṁbhava. These are :

एतच्छृङ्ग हरति पवनः किंस्विदित्युन्मुखभि-
दृष्टोत्साहश्चकितचेकितं मुग्धसिद्धाङ्गनाभिः । VI.b.115.19

is the Meghadūta I.14. Again the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa IV.52.28

मुदमेत्य कदाचिच्च स्वयमायाति दीनताम् ।
प्रावृड्वर्षकलोह्लासपूरादिव नदीरयः ॥ IV.52.28

is related to the Meghadūta I.45. Similarly the V.R. VI.a.120.17

तिर्यगूर्ध्वमधस्तान्मे व्यापको महिमा चितः ।
तस्यानन्तविलासस्य ज्ञात्वेति क इव क्षयी ॥ VI.a.120.17

is influenced by the Kumārasaṁbhava VI.71

तिर्यगूर्ध्वमधस्ताच्च व्यापको महिमा हरेः ।
त्रिविक्रमोद्यतस्यासीत्स तु स्वामाविकस्तव ॥ VI.71

A closer study reveals other passages in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa where the influence of Kālidāsa is also clearly seen. Thus IV.23.37, in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is

द्वे कान्ते तिष्ठतः सम्यक् पार्श्वयोः सत्यतैकते ।
इन्दोरिव विशाखे द्वे समाह्लादितचेतसी ॥ IV.23.37

is clearly related to

किमत्र चित्रं यदि विशाखे शशाङ्कलेखामनुवर्तेत ।

in the Śākuntala, Act III and

एष चित्रलेखाद्वितीयामुर्वशीं गृहीत्वा विशाखासहित
इव चन्द्र उपस्थितो राजर्षिः ।

in the Vikramorvaśīya, Act I.

Again VI.a.85.28 in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa

मेघान्तरेण गच्छन्ती मेघलग्नाश्च विद्युतः ।

अवियुक्ताः स्वभर्त्रा सा भूयो भूयो व्यलोकयत् ॥ VI.a.85.28

refers to the idea of the cloud and the lightning as husband and wife from the Meghadūta.

Again III.58.46 in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa

महिला तव लीलाऽहं प्राक्तनी सहधर्मिणी ।

वागर्थस्येव संपृक्ता स्थिता संश्लेषशालिनी ॥ III.58.46

is almost identical with the opening verse of the Raghuvamśa, I.1

वागर्थाविव संपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।

जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥ I.1

Both the poets are speaking of the relationship between husband and wife and the simile used is the same, there being no doubt that Kālidāsa is the original. The occurrence of the very words *vāgartha*, *samprkta* show that the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa did have Kālidāsa before him.

Dr. Atreya, Dr. Raghavan and Dr. Dasgupta are of opinion that it is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which borrows from and imitates Kālidāsa. To Dr. Atreya this offers one definite clue as to the earliest possible date for the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Dr. Dasgupta observes in this connection, "the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa whoever he may have been, flourished at least some time after Kālidāsa. It may also be assumed that the interval between Kālidāsa's time and that of the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa had been long enough to establish Kālidāsa's reputation as a poet."

4. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND BHĀRAVI

Dr. Atreya points out that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VI.b.93.84-85

शरदम्बुधरच्छायागतवयोर्यौ यौवनश्रियः

आपातरम्या विषयाः पर्यन्तपरितापिनः ॥ VI.b.93.84

अन्तकः पर्यवस्थाता जीविते महतामपि ।

चलन्त्यायूषि शाखाग्रलम्बाम्बुनीव देहिनाम् ॥ VI.b.93.85

are closely similar to the Kirātārjunīya XI.12-13

शरदम्बुधरच्छायागतवयोर्यौ यौवनश्रियः ।

आपातरम्या विषयाः पर्यन्तपरितापिनः ॥ XI.12

अन्तकः पर्यवस्थाता जन्मिनः संततापदः ।

इति त्याज्ये भवे भव्यो मुक्तावुत्तिष्ठते जनः ॥ XI.13

It is remarkable that the sequence of the verses is kept the same though there is some change in b of 85 and b 13.

Dr. Raghavan points out additional similarities. Thus the Kirāta. XI. 27 which is one of the fine verses from Bhāravi stressing the relativity of mutability of values has been used by the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa about 4 times, obviously because the idea may be described as almost being the burden of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

शून्यमाकीर्णतामेति तुल्यं व्यसनमुत्सवंः ।

विप्रलम्भोऽपि लाभाय सति प्रियसमागमे ॥ XI.27

शून्यमाकीर्णतामेति मृतिरप्युत्सवायते ।

आपत्संपदिवाभाति विद्वज्जनसमागमे ॥ II.16.3

शून्यमाकीर्णतामेति तुल्यं व्यसनमुत्सवंः ।

विप्रलम्भोऽपि लाभश्च मदस्वप्नादिसंविदि ॥ III.20.53

शून्यमाकीर्णतामेति वेदनात्स्वप्नदृक्चिव । 60.316

वेदनात्पीतमानीलं शुक्लं वाप्यनुसूयते ॥

आपद्वदुत्सवः खेदं करोति परिमोहतः ॥ III.60.32

आकीर्णं शून्यमेवास्य विपदश्चातिसंपदः ।

स्थितस्यापि महाराज्ये व्यसनान्येव सूत्सवाः ॥ VIb.102.4

Further the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.19.4 and III.90.14 are reminiscent of the Kirāta. III.37.

अकृत्रिमप्रेमरसा विलासालसगामिनी ।

साम्य संसारसर्वस्वमासीत्कुमुदहासिनी ॥ III.19.4

अकृत्रिमप्रेमरसानुविद्धं स्नेहं तयोस्तं प्रतिवीक्ष्य कान्तम् ।

वृक्षा अपि प्रेमरसानुविद्धाः शृङ्गारचेष्टाकुलिता भवन्ति ॥ III.90.14

अकृत्रिमप्रेमरसाभिरामं रामार्पितं दृष्टिविलोभि दृष्टम् ।

मनःप्रसादाञ्जलिना निकामं जग्राह पाथेयमिवेन्द्रसूनुः ॥ III.37

Dr. Atreya's conclusion is that Bhāravi borrows from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Dr. Raghavan thinks the case to be the reverse as the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa borrows from many other poets. It is indeed clear that in the verses given above it appears that the poet is using an idea and expression that has struck him. Bhāravi has been assigned to c. 550 A. D. and so the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which is the

borrower must be later than 550 A. D.

5. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND MĀTRGUPTA

Very little is known about the poet Mātrgupta who has been identified with Kālidāsa and has been understood to be a writer on dramaturgy, quoted by commentators in their commentaries on plays. By authorities he has been assigned to the latter part of the 6th century. We read a verse of his in the anthologies which runs as

शीतेनोद्धतस्य माषशिमिवच्चिन्तार्णवे मज्जतः ।

and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa faintly echoes this line in

सा तस्य ब्राह्मणी भार्या शोकेनात्यन्तकशिता ।

शुष्केव माषशिम्बीका हृदयेन द्विधा भवत् ॥ III.19.25.

The reference to *māṣaśimi* or *śimbikā* is striking.

6. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND DAṆḌIN

Daṇḍin the author of the Kāvyaḍarśa is a celebrated poet. Both as a writer on *alaṃkāra* and as the author of the Daśakumāracarita his fame is very great. Tradition once regarded him as the equal of Kālidāsa as the stories in the Bhojaprabandha etc. show. We have but very faint reminiscences of Daṇḍin in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Thus VIb.108.5

अस्ति कश्चिद्भुवो भागो सूषणं तत्र सूस्थितेः ॥ VIb.108.5

recalls Daṇḍin's sentences which begin in a similar fashion.

Similarly I.6.29 in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa

अद्य वर्तमहे नूनं धन्यानां धुरि घर्मतः ।

भवदागमनस्थेमे यद्वयं लक्ष्यमागताः ॥ I.6.29

recalls Kāvyaḍarśa I, where Daṇḍin is speaking about the *gaudī* or the poet's way of putting things in a dignified manner. According to Daṇḍin, however, the author of the work would be a *dākṣiṇātya*; for Daṇḍin points out that the *anuprāsadhī* and fondness for *gaurava* are the characteristics of the *dākṣiṇātyas*. But then style cannot decide the problem of the home of the poet especially when we remember that writers from Kāśmīr also reveal these tendencies.

7. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND BHAVABHŪTI

Dr. Atreya points out two verses in Bhavabhūti's Uttararāma-carita as having parallel passages in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Thus

the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa

यः कणो या च कणिका या वोचिर्यस्तरङ्गकः ।
 यः फेनो या च लहरी तद्यथा वारि वारिणि ॥ VIa.11.40
 तरङ्गकणकल्लोलैरनन्ताम्ब्वम्बुधाविव । V.72.23
 तदिवं ब्रह्मणि ब्रह्म ब्रह्मणा च विवर्तते । III.100.28

and similarly VIa.11.18,19,30,93,46; III.12.30 all are based on Bhavabhūti's famous

एको रसः करुण एव निमित्तमेदात्
 भिन्नः पृथग्पृथगिवाश्रयते विवर्तन् ।
 आवर्तबुद्बुदतरङ्गमयान्विकारात्
 अम्भो यथा सलिलमेव तु तत्समग्रम् ॥ III.47.

Again the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.114.9,6; VIb.49.186

यथोदिते दिनकरे कापि याति तमस्विनी ।
 तथा विवेकेऽभ्युदिते काप्यविद्या विलीयते ॥ III.114.9
 दृष्टे सर्वगते बोधे स्वयमेव विलीयते । III.114.6
 येन बोधात्मना बुद्धं स ज्ञ इत्यभिधीयते ।
 अद्वैतस्थोपशान्तस्य तस्य विश्वं न विद्यते ॥ VIb.49.18

are according to Dr. Atreya responsible for Bhavabhūti's

विद्याकल्पेन भरुता मेघानां भूयसामपि ।
 ब्रह्मणीव विवर्तानां कापि प्रविलयः कृतः ॥ VI.6.

Dr. Raghavan points out two more parallels. Thus the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VIb.51.7

अनाद्यन्तावभासात्मा बोध आत्मनि संस्थितः ।
 नानापदार्थरूपेण कमूर्म्यादितया यथा ॥ VIb.51.7
 कूजत्कुञ्जकठोरगह्वरनदीकृत्कारवत्कीचक-
 स्तम्भाडम्बरमूकमौकुलिकुलः क्रौञ्चाचलोयं गिरिः ।
 एतस्मिन्प्रबलाकिनां प्रचलतामुद्वेजिताः कूजितै-
 रद्वेजन्ति पुराणरोहणतरुस्तम्भेषु कुम्भीनसाः ॥ VIb.115.11

imitates the Uttararāma. III.47 and VIb.115.11 is the Uttararāma. III.29 in full but with a few changes in the first line. To these parallels I have to add IV.55.33

आवयोस्तत्र चित्राभिः कथामिरितरेतरम् ।
 शर्वरी सा व्यतीयाय मुहूर्तं द्वय कान्तयोः ॥ IV.55.33

which is reminiscent of Bhavabhūti's

अविदितगतयामा रात्रिरेव व्यरंसीत् । I.27.

Dr. Atreya observes that a careful comparison of the lines of Bhavabhūti with the parallel ones from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and a general acquaintance with the philosophy of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa leave no doubt as to which of the two is the borrower. "We have no hesitation in thinking that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa must have existed in the times of the great poet Bhavabhūti, if not earlier." On the other hand Dr. Raghavan observes : "It is hardly fair to suggest that Bhavabhūti lifted from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. It can also be borne in mind in this connection that the chapters Vīb. 115-119 form a section full of verses extracted from several poems." King Yaśovarman, patron of the poet Bhavabhūti reigned in the latter part of the 7th and the first part of the 8th century A.D.¹ We may assign Bhavabhūti therefore to c. 700 A.D. Mm. S. Kuppuswami Sastri also gives 640-725 A.D. as the time of Bhavabhūti.² The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa hence must belong to a later period.

8. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND BHATTA NĀRĀYAṆA

Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa, the author of the Veṇīsaṁhāra is assigned to the second half of the 7th century A.D.

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has one line of a verse I.16.27 in imitation of a line in the Veṇīsaṁhāra V. 27. Thus

सकलगुणजयाशा यत्र बद्धा महद्भि-
स्तमरिमिह विजेतुं चित्तमभ्युत्थितोऽहम् । I.16.27

reminds one of the

सकलरिपुजयाशा यत्र बद्धा सुतेस्ते । V.27

from the play. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa therefore would naturally be subsequent to the second half of the 7th century.

9. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND BHARTṚHARI

Bhartṛhari the author of the famous Śatakas died according to I'tsing about 651 A.D. Prof. S. Kuppuswami Sastri gives his date as 591-651 A.D. in his Introduction to the Brahmasiddhi (Madras,

1. Introduction to the Gauḍavaho by S. P. Pandit (2nd edition), p. xiv

2. Introduction to the Brahmasiddhi, p. lviii

p.1viii). The Vāsiṣṭhā Rāmāyaṇa has, as Dr. Raghavan shows passages which remind us of the Śatakas of Bhartṛhari. Dr. Atreya has pointed out three parallels between the Vāsiṣṭhā Rāmāyaṇa and the Vairāgyaśataka of Bhartṛhari, and some additional parallels between the Vāsiṣṭhā Rāmāyaṇa and the Vākya-pādiya of Bhartṛhari. Thus

दिक्कालाद्यनवच्छिन्नरूपत्वादतिविस्तृतम् ।

तदनाद्यन्तमाभासं भासनीयविवर्जितम् ॥ III.10.33

चिन्मात्रं विमलं शान्तं तद्वरूपं परमात्मनः । III.10.41

remind one of Bhartṛhari's

दिक्कालाद्यनवच्छिन्नानन्तचिन्मात्रमूर्तये ।

स्वानुभूत्येकमानाय नमः शान्ताय तेजसे ॥ VŚ.1.

It is to be noticed that here in the present case we do find a slight change but the first *śloka* of the Bikaner Ms. and further the first *śloka* of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭhasāra and of Nirvāṇasthiti is entirely identical with the VŚ.1.¹ Dr. Atreya thinks that *svānubhūtyekamānāya* is a typical expression of Vasiṣṭha who does not believe in any other *pramāṇa*, whereas Bhartṛhari believes in the *pramāṇatva* of *śāstra*² and hence it is Bhartṛhari who lifts.

Again the Vāsiṣṭhā Rāmāyaṇa VIb.136.33

आयुर्वायुविघटिताभ्रपटलीलम्बाम्बुवद्भङ्गुरं

भोगा मेघवितानमध्यविलसत्सौदामनीचञ्चलाः ।

लोला यौवनलालना जलरयः कायः क्षणपायवा-

न्मुत्र त्रासमुपेत्य संवृतिवशान्निर्वाणमन्विष्यताम् ॥ VIb.136.33

can be compared with VŚ.53 with identical expressions, or again

पुनर्दिनैककलनाशर्वरीसंस्थितिः पुनः ।

पुनस्तान्येव कर्माणि लज्जायै न च तुष्टये ॥ V.22.31

तमेव भुक्तविरसं व्यापारौघं पुनःपुनः ।

दिवसे दिवसे कुर्वन्प्राज्ञः कस्मान्न लज्जते ॥ V.22.33

can be compared with VŚ.54 for identical expressions as well as central idea.

1. Vide Mitra : Notices of Sanskrit Mss., Calcutta, 1880, Vol. I, p. 192, No. cccxi and Vol. IX, p. 283, No. 3208.

2. Vākya-pādiya, p. 15, Benares edn.

Dr. Raghavan pointing out additional parallel passages draws attention to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.111.8

स्वायत्तमेकान्तहितं स्वेप्सितत्यागवेदनम् ।

यस्य दुष्करतां यातं धिक्त्वं पुरुषकीटकम् ॥ III.111.8

where the expression *svāyattamekāntahitam* is used, for this very expression occurs in the NŚ. 7 (Nītiśataka) *svāyattamekāntahitam vidhātṛā*. Again in Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa V.93.8

क कटप्रोच्छलद्मृङ्गमण्डलोत्पलशेखराः ।

मुग्धस्त्रीध्यासमधुरैर्मशकैर्मथिता गजाः ॥ V.93.8

must be compared with the NŚ.6

व्यालं बालमृणालतन्तुभिरसौ रोद्धुं समुज्जृम्भते ।

as the idea of the elephant being controlled with the delicate lotus-fibres would indicate. Further NŚ.77

इतः स्वपिति केशवः कुलमितस्तदीयद्विषाम् ।

is reproduced in whole by the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in

इतः स्वपिति केशवः कुलमितस्तदीयद्विषा-

मितोऽपि शरणार्थिनः शिखरिपत्रिणः शेरते ।

इतोऽपि वडवानलः सह समस्तसंवर्तकै-

रहो विततमूर्जितं भरसहं च सिन्धोर्वपुः ॥ VIb.115.6

a section on the description of manifold objects where the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa draws upon many poets and hence is not likely to be the original as Dr. Atreya would be disposed to think. Again the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VIa.127.39,40

नाभिजात्यं न चारिष्यं न नयो न च विक्रमः ।

बलवन्ति पुराणानि सखे कर्माणि केवलम् ॥ VIa.127.39

अप्रतर्क्यात्प्रतीकारात्किमेवमवसीदसि ।

न लुम्पति ललाटस्थामीश्वरोऽप्यक्षरावलिम् ॥ VIa.127.40

remind us at once of some verses in the NŚ. describing the greater force of Fate and Destiny (*lalāṭalekhā*). Dr. Atreya points out two passages from this text which compare with VŚ. 1. A third echo of this verse is in VIa.11.85.

While discussing the relationship of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and Bhartṛhari, Dr. Atreya gives undue importance to the expression

svānubhūtyekamānāya. He has no doubts that the expression or verse belongs to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and that it is Bhartṛhari who borrows. He remarks : “The first *śloka* of the VŚ. is in imitation of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.10.33 and 41. This *śloka* occurs in exactly identical form at the beginning of the Ms. of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa found in the library of His Highness the Mahārājā of Bikaner. It cannot be mere chance coincidence. The whole of the VŚ. appears to be an imitation of the *Vairāgya prakaraṇa* of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and has other *ślokas* either identical with or written in imitation of the corresponding *ślokas* of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.” Certain Mss. of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa have the VŚ. 1 as *maṅgala śloka* but this is not an argument powerful enough to wipe out completely the stamp and authorship of Bhartṛhari. The very definite and convincing evidence of Somānanda, the author of Śivadr̥ṣṭi, refutes Dr. Atreya. Somānanda lived in the latter part of the 9th century. Dr. Raghavan who has studied the problem carefully remarks : “This verse, VŚ. 1 is certainly Bhartṛhari’s and not of the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. In chapter II of the Śivadr̥ṣṭi, Somānanda takes up Bhartṛhari for criticism. After the criticism of the Śabda-Brahman of Bhartṛhari appears a criticism of Bhartṛhari’s Advaita as embodied in a verse of Bhartṛhari’s and this verse is VŚ. 1. Every word and concept in this verse of Bhartṛhari—*svānubhūti*, *kālādyanavaccheda*, *śāntatejas* and *cinnmūrti*—is critically examined by Somānanda. It would, therefore, be very clearly proved that the present verse is undoubtedly a verse of Bhartṛhari. This would also remove the doubt lingering in some quarters that the three Śatakas (where this verse occurs) are not Bhartṛhari’s works. Scribes must have added this verse at the beginning of the abridged Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa Mss. It must be borne in mind that this verse, in its entirety, is not found in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa itself; it is not found, in entirety, in the abridged version of Abhinanda; it is found and that only in some Mss. of one of the smaller abridgements. Such a phenomenon of an addition of a *maṅgala śloka* from a different source is not a rare thing or an impossibility.” Dr. Raghavan points out that in Madras Library Ms. D. 1982 of Abhinanda’s epitome, there is a similar scribe-added *maṅgala śloka* on Dakṣiṇāmūrti from some other source. From all this it would appear very clear that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has acquaintance with the Śatakas of Bhartṛhari which in the days of the

author must have been very popular and on which he draws in his usual manner. Dr. Atreya's conclusion that in this case Bhartṛhari is the borrower, therefore, is to be discarded.

10. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND BĀṆA

Bāṇa wrote in the first half of the 7th century A.D. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has some ideas and expressions borrowed from Bāṇa's Kādambarī. It is certainly not reasonable to suppose that Bāṇa picked out from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as would be the conclusion almost forced on us if we accept the date of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which Dr. Atreya has proposed.

Thus in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, we read

आदर्शः सर्वशास्त्राणामर्थिनां कल्पपादपः ।

पादपीठं द्विजाद्याणां राकाधर्ममृतत्विवः ॥ III.19.23

which is from Bāṇa's description of King Śūdraka in the opening of Kādambarī (p.8) where the very words *ādarśaḥ sarvaśāstrāṇām* occur. Similarly in III.46.15,16

अथोदपतदादित्यपथपीवररोधकम् ।

रजोनिभेन मूपीठमम्बरोद्भूयनोन्मुखम् ॥ III.46.15

गर्भवासमिवापन्नं तेनासीत्तन्महापुरम् ।

मूढत्वं यौवनेनेव घनतामाययौ तमः ॥ III.46.16

describe the dust raised by the army and contain the ideas that the world itself appeared to have entered a womb. These two ideas are taken from Bāṇa's description of the marching out of Candrāpīḍa's army. In the Kādambarī (p.221) we have

अमरलोकमादरोह रजोनिषेण मही ।

मुहूर्तेन च गर्भवासमिव विवेश पृथिवी ।

Thirdly there are echoes of the advice given by Śukanāsa to Candrāpīḍa in the Lakṣmīnindā, especially in I.13. Thus

एषा हि पदमेकत्र न निबध्नाति दुर्भगा । I.13.4

is almost identical with Bāṇa's

न क्वचिदपि निर्भरमाबध्नाति पदम् । p.199

Again

विनाशमेव घत्सेऽन्तर्दीपशिखेव कज्जलम् । I.13.5

is almost identical with Bāṇa's

यथा यथा चेयं...दीप्यते...दीपशिखेव कज्जलमलिनमेव
कर्म केवलमुद्वमति । p.201.

Yet a third place is

एषा हि विषमा दुःखभोगिनां गहना गुहा । I.13.12

based on Bāṇa's

इयं...आवासदरी दोषाशीविषाणाम् । p. 201.

Again in I.13.15 we have

राहुदंष्ट्रा विवेकेन्दोः सौजन्याम्भोजचन्द्रिका । I.13.15

which reminds us of Bāṇa's

राहुजिह्वा धर्मेन्दुमण्डलस्य । p.202

Again IV.49 has the description of a big *kadamba* tree for a whole canto where IV.49.13

सहस्रभुजशाखाख्य पूरिताकाशकोटरम् ।
विश्वरूपमिवोन्नतं चन्द्रार्ककृतकुण्डलम् ॥ IV.49.13

is after a passage in Bāṇa's description of the *śālmali* tree in the beginning of the Kādāmbarī

दिक्चक्रवालपरिमाणमिव शुल्लता भुवनान्तरालविप्रकीर्णेन शाखासंचयेन
प्रलयकालताण्डवप्रसारितभुजसहस्रमुडुपतिशेखरमिव विडम्बयितुमुद्यतः । p.47.

Yet another place which reminds one of Bāṇa is III.16.I0-11 which refer to the various pastimes like the *prahelikā* etc. which is after Bāṇa's description of the various pastimes of the kings in the court of Tārāpīḍa.

In one place the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa II.12.11-18

विषमो ह्यतितरां संसाररागो भोगीव दशति
असिरिव छिनत्ति कुन्त इव वेधयति रज्जुरिवावेष्टयति
पावक इव दहति रात्रिरिवान्धयति । II.12.14

is a very clear imitation of Subandhu and Bāṇa, especially of the latter. The prose of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is written in two styles, the purely literary in the wake of the acknowledged masters of Sanskrit prose like Bāṇa and Subandhu and the simple yet dignified philosophical style in the wake of the Upaniṣads and the acknowledged master

of this style, the great Śaṅkara : thus the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa II.13.9-10; III.93.2-15. In another place III.104.25

इतिहासमये पुण्ये वाच्यमाने च पुस्तके । III.104.25

the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa refers to the recital of the holy historical works like the Mahābhārata perhaps just as Bāṇa refers to the public recitals of the Mahābhārata in the times of Śrīharṣa.

All this would go to prove that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has been written by a writer who was thoroughly acquainted with Bāṇa and has tried to imitate him.

11. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND ĀNANDAVARDHANA

Ānandavardhana, the author of the Dhvanyāloka was at the court of King Avantivarman in Kāśmīr, 855-884 A.D. The author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, a critical student and master of *kāvya* and *alamkāra* shows acquaintance with the *dhvani* theory as propounded in the Dhvanyāloka, and what is more, he reproduces one of Ānanda's own verses quoted by him in his Dhvanyāloka with some changes as usual. Thus the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has in VIb.197.15-17

वर्गत्रयोपदेशो हि शास्त्रादिष्वस्ति राघव

ब्रह्मप्राप्तिस्त्ववाच्यत्वान्नास्ति तच्छासनेष्वपि ॥ VIb.197.15

केवलं सर्ववाक्यार्थेष्वन्यमानावगम्यते ।

कालश्रीः प्रसवेनेव स्वयं स्वानुमतेन सा ॥ VIb.197.16

सर्वार्थातिगतं शास्त्रे विद्यते ब्रह्मवेदनम् ।

सर्वगातिगतं स्वच्छं लावण्यमिव योषिति ॥ VIb. 197.17

This is a discussion about the *vācyārtha* and the *dhvanyamānārtha* of the *śāstras*, the *trivarga* and *brahmaprāpti* respectively. The author to make the point about the *dhvani* clear, takes the analogy of the *lāvanya* of women, distinct and surpassing in their body and build. There cannot be any reasonable doubt about the fact of the last verse of this passage (17) being based explicitly on the Dhvanyāloka I.4

प्रतीयमानं पुनरन्यदेव वस्त्वस्ति वाणीषु महाकवीनाम् ।

यत्तत्प्रसिद्धावयववतिरिक्तं विभाति लावण्यमिवाङ्गनाम् ॥ I.4.

Again the last verse of the Chapter 190 of VI.b.

या व्यापारवती रसाद्रसविदां काचित्कवीनां नवा

दृष्टिर्यां परिनिष्ठितार्थविषयोन्मेषा च वैपश्चित् ।

ते द्वे अप्यवलम्ब्य विश्वमखिलं निर्वाणितं निर्वृतं

यावद्दृष्टिदृशो न सन्ति कलिता नो शून्यता नो भ्रमः ॥ VIb.190.80

is almost identical with Ānanda's own verse quoted by him in the Dhvanyāloka (p. 227, Kāvya-mālā edn.). Ānanda's passage runs

...प्रभेदान्तराणामपि कदाचित्संकीर्णत्वं भवत्येव ।

यथा ममैव—

या व्यापारवती रसान्तरसयितुं काचित्कवीनां नवा

दृष्टिर्या परिनिष्ठितार्थविषयोन्मेषा च वैपश्चिती ।

ते द्वे अप्यवलम्ब्य विश्वमनिशं निर्वाणयन्तो वयं

श्रान्ता नैव च लब्धमब्धिशयन त्वद्भूक्तितुल्यं सुखम् ॥

इत्यत्र विरोधालंकारेणार्थान्तरसंक्रमितवाच्यस्य

ध्वनिप्रभेदस्य संकीर्णत्वम् ।

One wonders if Dr. Atreya would suggest that here also Ānanda is the borrower and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is the original. Dr. Raghavan rightly observes : 'It is clearly impossible for Dr. Atreya to suggest even here that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is the borrowed.'

Another verse which occurs in both the works, the Dhvanyāloka (p. 180) and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is the famous

सत्यं मनोरमाः कामाः सत्यं रम्या विभूतयः ।

किं तु मत्ताङ्गनापाङ्गभङ्गलोलं हि जीवितम् ॥ VIb.93.97.60.

12. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND UDBHAṬA

Udbhaṭa, the commentator on the Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata and on the Kāvyaālambkāra of Bhāmaha, wrote a treatise, the Kāvyaālambkārasaṃgraha, and lived in the times and at the court of King Jayāpīḍa (779-813 A. D.). It is from his time that orthodox *ālambkāra* writers began to speak of nine *rasas* including the *śānta*. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in VIb.41.6

रसभावविकाराद्वयं नृत्यन्त्यभिनयैर्नवैः । VIb.41.6

possibly refers to the 'new' as well as nine *rasas* by the *śleṣa* in *navaiḥ*; really *navaiḥ* would go with *abhinayaiḥ*.

13. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND RĀJAŚEKHARA

Rājaśekhara, a poet, dramatist and critic, inasmuch as he cites Ānandavardhana is later than him, and is assigned to 880-920 A.D.

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa shows its acquaintance with Rājaśekhara's Viddhaśālabhāṅjikā and the Kāvya-mīmāṃsā. Thus in III.29.47

शिलाजठरनिष्पन्दं मुष्टिग्राह्यं तमः कुतः ।

we meet with the fancy of pitchy darkness as capable of being seized by hand and this is taken from a verse in the Viddhaśālabhāṅjikā III.6, a verse which Rājaśekhara quotes in his Kāvya-mīmāṃsā also.

“तनुलग्ना इव ककुभः भ्रूवलयं चरणचारमात्रमिव ।

दिवमिव चालिकदध्नीं मुष्टिग्राह्यं तमः कुरुते” ॥ (G.O.S. p. 80)

where fancied descriptions are given.

Again on p.59 of his Kāvya-mīmāṃsā, Rājaśekhara quotes a verse

“तत्तावदेव शशिनः स्फुरितं महीयो यावन्न तिग्मरुचिमण्डलमभ्युदेति ।

अभ्युदगते सकलधामनिधौ तु तस्मिन्निन्दोः सिताभ्रशकलस्य च को विशेषः ॥”

He follows it up by another verse which is its adaptation with its last line in tact. According to Vallabhadeva's Subhāṣitāvali, verse 555, this is a verse of one Prakāśadatta, but according to the Saduktikarṇāmṛta of Śrīdharadāsa, it is a verse of one Madhukūṭa. Of both these names we possess little or no information. The author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa must have seen this context for in VIb.115.46

तावद्विभाति गगने परिपूर्णचन्द्रो

यावद्वधूवदनमेति न सद्यः बाह्यम् ।

अभ्युदगतेऽङ्गणनमस्यबलाननेन्वा-

विन्दोः सिताभ्रशकलस्य च को विशेषः ॥ VIb.115.46

it turns off its own *samasyāpūrti* of the same last line. This occurs in a section of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which is clearly based on lines or ideas from other sources and there is no possibility of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa inspiring Rājaśekhara.

14. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND THE NĀṬYAŚĀSTRA

Wide as the range of scholarship of the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is, it is no wonder if he shows his close acquaintance with the Nāṭyaśāstra in general. Thus in VIb.41.6

रसभावविकाराद्यं नृत्यन्त्यमिनयैर्नवैः । VIb.41.6

with a pun on the word *navaiḥ* he is referring to the nine *rasas*. As has been pointed out by Dr. Raghavan, Udbhaṭa, 779-813 A.D., is responsible for this idea of the nine *rasas*, for it is from his time that

orthodox *alamkāra* writers began to speak of nine instead of eight *rasas* as Bharata had taught. Further in III.110.19

रसनाद्रसतामेति विचित्रास्तत्र वृत्तिषु ।

नाटके नटवद्देहे मन एवानुवर्तते ॥ III.110.19

the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa lifts the words of Rudraṭa (800-850 A.D.) as his words are

रसनाद्रसत्वमेतेषां मधुरादीनामिवोक्तमाचार्यैः । KL.12.4

Further the author appears to agree with the view of some writers in Dramaturgy that the *naṭa* has the enjoyment of *rasa* while he plays the part in a *rūpaka* or a *nāṭaka*. Thus having stated that

नाटके नटवद्देहे मन एवानुवर्तते । III.19

he goes on to observe in III.110.49

रसावेशादुपादत्ते शैलूष इव भूमिकाम् । III.110.49.

Bharata and authors like Viśvanātha who follow him think that the *naṭa* does not experience the *rasa* (N.Ś, 26.17, 18, 19; S.D, 3.19). It is, however, Dhanañjaya, the author of the Daśarūpa (994 A.D.) who in 4, 42 expresses the view that the *naṭa* has the experience of *rasa*, and therefore the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is following the Daśarūpa. Again the idea of a *nāṭaka* is beautifully used in III.102.35

मनो ह्यात्मवधं नाम नाटकं परित्यजति । III.102.35.

III.81.19 is another place where occurs a reference to the *nāṭaka* and *abhinaya*. Further, we have the statement of *rasa* in

विविक्तहृदयाम्भोजं हृदयाह्लादनं परम् ।

रसवत्स्वादु भातीदं सरः सत्संगमोपमम् ॥ VIb.117.11.

The pun on the word *rasavad* is obvious and the words in the verse especially *viviktahṛdayāmbhojam* and *hṛdayāhlādanam param* deserve notice.

15. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND THE HITOPADEŚA, PAÑCATANTRA

In III.99.41, the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa refers to the popular story 'Laukiki gāthā' as the commentator puts it—of the meddlesome monkey—as given in the Hitopadeśa and the Pañcatantra

अपश्यन्काष्ठरन्ध्रस्थवृषणाक्रमणं यथा ।

कीलोत्पाटी कपिर्दुःखमेतीदं हि तथा मनः ॥ III.99.41.

The verse is a clear and complete summary of the said story and the wording of the second line suggests the possible source of the same.

16. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND THE VETĀLAPAÑCAVIMŚATI

In VIa.70.73, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa narrates a story of a King and a Vetāla. The vampire catches him and puts certain question which if not satisfactorily answered would end in the punishment of being devoured by him. This story is obviously very strongly reminiscent of the story of Vikrama and the Vampire which describes a similar meeting of the two during a night.

17. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND ANONYMOUS WRITERS

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in the chapters 115-116 of Vīb. describes several objects like mountains, rivers, towns, sun, moon, etc. One comes across many *jātis*, *anyoktis* and also *utprekṣās*, some of which we do feel as others' verses but we are not able to identify these other authors from whom the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has borrowed. Thus for example, Vīb.116.80 is

भ्रातः कोकिल कूजितैरलमलं नायात्यनघर्यो गुण-
स्तूष्णीमास्व विशीर्णपर्णपटलच्छन्ने क्वचित्कोटरे ।
उद्दामद्रुमकन्दरे कटुरटत्काकावलीसंकुलः
कालोयं शिशिरस्य संप्रति सखे नायं वसंतोत्सवः ॥

a *kokilānyokti* and is found anonymously both in the Śāraṅgadharapaddhati and the Subhāṣitāvali.

18. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND MAMMAṬA

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is acquainted with the Kāvya prakāśa of Mammaṭa, as can be seen from VIa.22.22,23. The text is

इतिहासं महाश्रयमन्यं रामायणाभिधम् ।
ग्रन्थलक्षप्रमाणं च ज्ञानशास्त्रं स्मराम्यहम् ॥ VIa.22.22
रामवद्वयवहर्तव्यं न रावणविलासवत् ।
इति यत्र धियां ज्ञानं हस्ते फलमिवापितम् ॥ VIa.22.23.

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is speaking of the Vedas, the Purāṇas and the Itihāsas in 19-22 and the 23rd gives the moral of the Rāmāyaṇa. The wording here can be compared with Mammaṭa's

... रामादिवद्वर्तितव्यं न रावणादिवदिति उपदेशः...Kp. I.2.

Another significant point is the order in this particular Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa passage—the Vedās, Purāṇas and Itihāsa is the same as given in Mammaṭa's *vṛtti*. According to Prof. A. B. Gajendragadakar, Mammaṭa flourished in the latter half of the 11th century. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which shows its acquaintance with Mammaṭa must belong to a subsequent date.

19. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND THE SUBHĀṢITAS

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has, as a matter of fact, many *subhāṣitas* in it. As Dr. Raghavan has pointed out, some sections of the work appear to a very large extent based on the compositions of other poets. The author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is a very gifted poet. He sees a verse almost readymade before him, thinks of his own context, makes a slight and subtle change and produces a very fine verse which serves his purpose. Attention may be drawn to V.18.61 which is a clever modification. Thus

अयं बन्धुरयं नेति गणना लघुचेतसाम् ।

उदारचरितानां तु विगतावरणैव धीः ॥ V.18.61

and this may be compared with the famous

अयं निजः परोवेति गणना लघुचेतसाम् ।

उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ॥

or again I.14.13

भारोऽविवेकिनः शास्त्रं भारो ज्ञानं च रागिणः ।

अशान्तस्य मनो भारो भारोऽनात्मविदो वपुः ॥ I.14.13.

Or again in I.28.17

दिवसास्ते महान्तस्ते संपदस्ताः क्रियाश्च ताः ।

सर्वं स्मृतिपथं यातं यामो वयमपि क्षणात् । I.28.17

has evidently before it Bhartṛhari's

सा रम्या नगरी महान्तं नृपतिः...सर्वं यस्य

वशादगात्स्मृतिपथं कालाय तस्मै नमः ॥

as the tone, construction and words *mahān*, *sarvaṁ* and *smṛtipatham* show. Or again we have a very clever turn given to Bhavabhūti's

अविदितगतयामा रात्रिरेव व्यरंसीत् । in

आवयोस्तत्र चित्राभिः कथाभिरितरेतरम् ।

शर्वरी सा व्यतीयार्थं मुहूर्तं इव कान्तयोः ॥ VI.55.33.

This power of selection and adaptation of ready material is simply astounding. The composition is a result of a very thorough study in which material has been assimilated in a masterly manner.

20. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND ABHINANDA

The importance of Abhinanda from the point of the criticism of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is very great. He is said to have written the Laghu-yoga-vāsiṣṭha (LYV.), an epitome of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa; and so naturally his date would fix up the upper limit for the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. But unfortunately the problem is not so simple and the solution by no means easy. It is generally believed that Gauḍa Abhinanda of Kāśmīr is the author of the LYV and that it is this very Abhinanda, the author of the Kādambārī-kathā-sāra, son of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta and who flourished in the first half of the 9th century.

Dr. Atreya observes : 'By the middle of the 9th century the huge work—the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa—of about 32,000 *śloka*s was summarised into a Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha-sāra or LYV of some 6000 *śloka*s by Abhinanda, a Gauḍa brāhmaṇa of Kāśmīr. This fact is accepted as true by Konow,¹ Keith² and Winternitz in his *Geschichte der indischen Litteratur*.³ A Ms. of this Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra is reported by Hall⁴ to be existing in the Government Sanskrit Library, Benares. The LYV has also been published by the Nirāṇayasāgara Press, Bombay, 1887. Gauḍa Abhinanda was the son of Jayanta Vṛttikāra. His great-great-grand-father lived under the King Muktāpīḍa Lalitāditya of Kāśmīr, whose succession to the throne according to Bühler cannot have taken place before 724 A.D. Gauḍa Abhinanda must, therefore, have lived about the middle of the 9th century.⁵ Dr. Atreya accepts this and proposes an earlier, pre-Śaṅkara date for the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

Mr. Divanji observes⁶ in this connection : "I have seen the abridgment by Abhinanda to which Konow refers and whom he places in the middle of the 9th century. This is no doubt an abridgment of

1. Karpūramañjarī, HOS, Vol. IV, p. 197

2. Catalogue; Bodeleian Library, Ms. 850

3. Vol. III, p. 444

4. Bibliography, Vedanta, Ms. No. CXLIV.

5. Stein Konow, Karpūramañjarī of Rājaśekhara, HOS, Vol. IV, p. 197

6. Proceedings of 7th AIOC, p. 26

the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa; but for Konow's inference as to its author having lived about the middle of the 9th century, I am of the opinion that it is based on a very shaky foundation. In the first place, it is based on the assumption that Rājaśekhara, the author of Karpūramañjarī is mentioned in the Sūktimuktāvalī as a contemporary poet by Vasukalpa and Abhinanda. That assumption is based on a statement to that effect in Aufrecht Cat. Catalogorum (p. 502) which, in my experience in the case of Madhusūdana Saraswatī's and Śaṁkara's works, has proved to be not a very safe guide, because his information was based on facts supplied to him by several persons who were not always sufficiently critical in drawing inferences. Secondly, although he is aware that there were two Abhinandas, and their father's names differed, he has taken them to be one and the same individual on the authority of Dr. Bühler. Assuming for the sake of argument that Bühler's view is correct, Abhinanda is said to be the great-great grandson of an unnamed man who lived in the time of Muktāpīḍa Lalitāditya who is believed to have ascended the throne of Kāśmīr "not before 724" and from that it is inferred that Abhinanda must have lived in the middle of the 9th century, i.e., about 850 A.D." Mr. Divanji thinks that the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is a composition of the first half of the 10th century or any time after that. Further he argues that the argument based on this abridgment by Abhinanda presents a somewhat insurmountable difficulty, yet the evidence of the composition of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa during or after the second half of the 10th century is so strong that this 'Abhinanda argument' cannot be given a preponderating weight and some other explanation is to be sought to explain the anomaly. The entire theory of Abhinanda is a structure of assumptions and guesses.

Prof. S. Bhattacharya remarks :¹ "The LYV or Mokṣopāyasāra which presupposes the bigger work (described in I.O. Descriptive Catalogue, Entry No. 2424) is a work in 92 verses by a Bengali writer, possibly a North-Bengal writer, named Abhinanda Tarkavāgīśa with many titles, Gauṇamaṇḍalam-laikārapaṇḍita Samidviveka etc. who is thus to be distinguished from the famous Gauḍa Abhinanda of Kāśmīr, the author of the synopsis of the Kādambarī. A commentary on this LYV is written by one Mahīdhara of Bengal, the Ms. of which

1. Proceedings, 3rd AIOC, p. 553.

is dated Vikram *Saṁvat* 1654, i.e., 1598 A.D. Thus Prof. Bhattacharya has nothing to say about Abhinanda of the 9th century and Dr. Atreya thinks that he has not seen the LYV of 6,000 verses by Abhinanda.

Thus we have two Abhinandas, one of the 9th century, Gauḍa Abhinanda and the other Abhinanda hailing from Bengal belonging to a much later period. Matters become all the more complicated when we find Dr. Raghavan announcing : "we know of two Abhinandas both of them Gauḍa. One of them is the author of the *Rāmacarita*, patronised by Haravarṣa Yuvarāja. The author of the LYV cannot be this Abhinanda, son of Śātānanda. For his time is c. 900 A. D. and he is definitely an older contemporary of Rājaśekhara, if not actually earlier.¹ Not only does Sodhala mention him before Rājaśekhara, but also if *Saduktikarṇāmṛta* (P.O.S., p.194) *saṁjanyām-kura* etc., a verse of an Abhinanda on Rājaśekhara, is a verse of this Abhinanda, Rājaśekhara must have been a younger contemporary of Abhinanda.² As I have tried to place the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa after Rājaśekhara, it is not possible that this Abhinanda made the *saṁgraha* of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

Besides there is direct evidence to prove that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa was produced after the time of Abhinanda, the author of the *Rāmacarita*. In the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VIa.128.81-94, we have a hymn on Rāma as God which is for the most part, reproduction from Abhinanda's *Rāmacarita* IX.8-66 with omissions and occasional changes. Here are the parallels.

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

अत्रैव कुरु विश्वासमयं स पुरुषः परः ।
विश्वार्थमधिताम्भोधिरांम्भीरागमगोचरः॥81
परिपूर्णपरानन्दः समः श्रीवत्सलाञ्छनः ।
सर्वेषां प्राणिनां रामः प्रदाता सुप्रसादितः॥82

THE RĀMACARITA

कुमार कुरु दिश्वासमयं स परमः पुमान् ।
विश्वार्थमुत्थितोऽम्भोधेराम्भीरागमगोचरः॥8
अनादिनिधनः श्रीमानयं श्रीवत्सलाञ्छनः ।
पुरुषः पुरुषार्थानां प्रदाता*
सुप्रसादितः ॥* प्रसीता

अयं निहन्ति कुपितः सृजत्ययमसत्सकान् । अयं निहन्त्यकुपितः सृजत्ययमनुत्सुकः ।
विश्वदिर्विश्वजनको घाता भर्ता महासखः॥83 उदास्ते चायमश्रान्तः स्वपित्ययमतन्द्रितः॥10
अयं व्युत्क्रान्तनिःसारमृदुसंसारघूर्तकैः । अयं व्युत्क्रान्तनिस्सारसंसारमृगतृष्णिकैः ।

1. Introduction, *Rāmacarita*, GOS., p. XXI.

2. Introduction, *Sūktimuktāvali*, GOS., p. 15.

- आनन्दसिन्धुविततो वीतरागैर्विगाह्यते ॥84 आनन्दसिन्धुविततो वीतरागैर्विगाह्यते ॥14
 कचिन्मुक्त इवात्मस्थः कचित्तरुपदाभिधः । कचिद्बाल इवोल्लीलः कचिन्मुक्त इवालसः ।
 कचित्प्रणीतप्रकृतिः कचित्तत्स्थः पुमानयम् ॥85 कचित्प्रलीनप्रकृतिः प्रकृतिस्थः पुमानयम् ॥15
 कालत्रयोमिविजयी विक्रान्तभुवनत्रयः ।
 अयं त्रयीमयो देवस्त्रैगुण्यगहनातिगः । अयं त्रयीमयो देवस्त्रैगुण्यगहनातिगः ॥16
 असङ्ख्यचरणो दोषमेकमप्युदीरयन् ।
 जयत्यङ्गैरयं षड्भिवेदात्मा पुरुषोऽद्भुतः ॥86 जयत्यङ्गैरयं षड्भिवेदात्मा पुरुषोऽद्भुतः ॥17
 अयं चतुर्बाहुरयं विश्वस्रष्टा चतुर्मुखः । अयं त्राता चतुर्बाहुरयं स्रष्टा चतुर्मुखः ।
 अयमेव महादेवः संहर्ता च त्रिलोचनः ॥87 अयमेव महादेवः संहर्ता च त्रिलोचनः ॥18
 अजोऽयं जायते योगाजागरूकः सदा महान् । अजोऽयं जायते योगी जागरूकः स्वपित्ययम् ।
 विभर्ति भगवानेतद्विरूपो विश्वरूपवान् ॥88 अयं विभर्ति भगवानरूपो विश्वरूपताम् ॥20
 विजयो विक्रमेणेव प्रकाश इव तेजसा । विजयो विक्रमेणेव प्रकाश इव तेजसा ।
 प्रज्ञोत्कर्षः श्रुतेनेव सुपर्णनायमुह्यते ॥89 प्रज्ञोत्कर्षः श्रुतेनेव सुपर्णनायमुह्यते ॥ 29
 अयं दशरथो धन्यः सुतो यस्य परः पुमान् । राजा दशरथो धन्यः सुतो यस्य स्वभूरयम् ।
 धन्यः स दशकण्ठोऽपि चिन्त्यश्चित्तेन धन्यः स दशकण्ठोऽपि भिन्नश्चिन्त्येत
 योऽमुना ॥90 योऽमुना ॥50
 हा स्वर्गममुना शून्यं हा पातालादिहागतः । हा स्वर्गममुना शून्यं हा पातालमिमं विना ।
 तस्यागमादयं लोको मध्यमः श्रेष्ठतां गतः ॥91 तस्यागमादयं लोको मध्यमः श्रेष्ठतां गतः ॥51
 राम इत्यवतीर्णोऽयमर्णवान्तःशयः पुमान् । राम इत्यवतीर्णोऽयमर्णवान्तःशयः पुमान् ।
 चिदानन्दघनो रामः परमात्मायमव्ययः ॥92 स च नक्तंचरपतिर्द्वितीयो दितिसम्भवः ॥57
 निगृहीतेन्द्रियग्रामा रामं जानन्ति योगिनः । निगृहीतेन्द्रियग्रामा रामं जानन्ति योगिनः ।
 वयं त्ववरमेवास्य रूपं रूपयितुं क्षमाः ॥93 वयं त्ववरमेवास्य रूपं रूपयितुं क्षमाः ॥65
 रघोरघोच्छेदकरो भगवानिति शुश्रुम । चक्रे चक्रे हुतारातिरधिष्ठानं कुलेऽमुना ।
 वसिष्ठ कृपया त्वं हि व्यवहारपरं कुरु ॥94 रघोरघोच्छेदकरो भगवानिति शुश्रुम ॥66

It is significant that in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa 81d and 83a-b the correct reading is to be had from the Rāmacarita. Ānandabodha muddles with the wrong readings before him.

The other Abhinanda—other than Abhinanda of the Rāmacarita—is the son of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta and the author of the Kādambarikathā-sāra. It is 'unhappy' that Dr. Atreya makes these two Abhinandas identical on p. 38 of his thesis. This Abhinanda, son of Jayanta, was also of the same time as the other Abhinanda and it is not easy to take him either as the author of the LYV. I have tried to place the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa after Rājaśekhara, and even after the end of the

10th century. The identity of the Abhinanda who epitomised the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa must be left an open question: In all probability, he is a later and third Abhinanda, and into this question let me enter some other time." Thus does Dr. Raghavan express himself in regard to this Abhinanda problem.

Thus here we have now three Abhinandas, two Gauḍa Abhinandas, one the author of the Rāmacarita which the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa knows and the other is Abhinanda, the author of the Kādambarīkathāsāra whose relationship to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is open to serious doubt. The third Abhinanda Tarkavāgīśa is the author of the LYV. or Mokṣopāyasāra. He is, according to Prof. Bhattacharya, a writer from Bengal and his work was commented upon by Mahīdhara of 1598 A.D. Though of small fame when compared with the famous Abhinanda of Kāśmīr, this Abhinanda of Bengal also was a great accomplished scholar as his titles would show. It is significant that the Ms. in the Govt. Oriental Mss. Library, Madras—vide Rangacharya : Catalogue Nos. 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, which is called LYV. or Jñāna-Vāsiṣṭha—an epitome in 44 *sargas* in Telugu script gives the name of the compiler as 'Kāśmīr-Paṇḍita.' In Sanskrit literature such confusion of names and dates is too common and of frequent occurrence. Konow, Bühler, Keith all have relied on guesses and unreliable information. Was this Abhinanda, responsible for a summary called Gauḍa on account of the land whence he came and so this helped the confusion and he was indentified with the famous Gauḍa Abhinanda? As Dr. Raghavan has shown the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is later than Abhinanda of the 9th century. The Padacandrikā described in I.O.Cat. entry 2399 is a commentary on the LYV. and is ascribed to Rāmānandatīrtha and if this is the same Rāmānandatīrtha who died in 1377 A.D., then this would fix the lower limit for the LYV. and Abhinanda, and if it is a commentary on the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa then it would help in fixing the date of the bigger text. Anyway, all things put together the Laghu Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha is not a work of the 9th century. Dr. Atreya's efforts to assign a pre-Śaṅkara period on the strength of the summary by Abhinanda is unconvincing and strange as it may appear but then it is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa that would put the lower limit for our Abhinanda whose identification is yet an open question; for the date of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa can be fixed in a more or less definite manner on other counts.

CHAPTER IV

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA AND SANSKRIT PHILOSOPHICAL LITERATURE

All critical students of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa are no doubt struck by the very strong Buddhistic tone that the work reveals and which has made scholars to ask themselves the following questions : Are we dealing here with a Buddhistic work or with a Brahmanical work under Buddhistic influence or an intentional Brahmanic modification of Buddhistic ideas and philosophy? What is the precise relation of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to Brahmanical sacred literature and philosophy? The search for material to answer this question is interesting as well as instructive. It reveals that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa presupposes almost the whole of the Vedic literature and that it has its core, the central thought based on the Upaniṣads.

Thus beginning with the Ṛgveda we find the famous Puruṣasūkta X.90 reflected in Vīb.20.3 and 9 in particular. Thus

जगत्पदार्थसार्थस्य विराट् सर्वस्य कारणम् । Vīb.20.3

refers to the central idea of the Ṛgvedic *sūkta* and again in

मनश्चन्द्रमसो जातं मनसश्चन्द्र उत्थितः । Vīb.20.9

is an idea where even the words come from the Vedic

चन्द्रमा मनसो जातः ॥ X.90.13.

The same idea of Virāṭ is again used to its own purpose by the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in Vīb.73 and 74

Leaving the Veda we come to the Brāhmaṇas which teach the *kriyākāṇḍa* and the attitude of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa towards the *kriyākāṇḍa* is reflected in

तत्र क्रियाकाण्डपरास्त्वया पुत्र महाधिया ।

उपदेइयाः क्रियाकाण्डक्रमेण क्रमशालिना ॥ II.10.41.

In these words Lord Brahmā advises Vasiṣṭha to instruct men regarding the path to salvation. The *kriyākāṇḍa* is not to be condemned in the Buddhist manner. Yet its view is in the wake of the *jñanakāṇḍa* that the fruit of the *kriyā* is a limited one. Thus

राजसूयाश्वमेधाद्यैरिद्धा यज्ञशतैरपि ।

महाकल्पान्तमप्यंशं स्वर्गं प्राप्नोति नाधिकम् ॥ V.9.38.

The primary and perhaps the only use of Vedic *kriyā* is the purification of mind. It is said

गवाश्वनरमेधाद्यैर्यज्ञैर्विपुलदर्क्षणैः ॥ IV.51.5

कालेनामलतां याते वितते तस्य चेतसि ।

बलादवततारान्तर्जनिमात्मप्रसादजम् ॥ IV.51.6.

It is, however, when we come to the *jñanakāṇḍa* or the Upaniṣads that a good many similar ideas and expressions are seen to occur in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Thus

यतः सर्वाणि भूतानि प्रतिभान्ति स्थितानि च ।

यत्रैवोपशमं यान्ति तस्मै सत्यात्मने नमः ॥ I.1.1

is obviously based on the Taittiriya III.1, the Bṛhadāraṇyaka II.1.20 and II.5.11. Thus the Upaniṣadic passages run

यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते, येन जातानि जीवन्ति,

यत्प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति... Taitt. III.1

and

—अस्मात् आत्मनः सर्वे प्राणाः सर्वे लोकाः सर्वे देवाः

सर्वाणि भूतानि व्युच्चरन्ति तस्योपनिषत्सत्यस्य

सत्यमिति प्राणाः वै सत्यं तेषामेष सत्यम् । Bṛhad. II.1.20

and again

इदं सत्यं सर्वेषां... अस्मिन् आत्मनि सर्वाणि भूतानि ।

Further the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa I.1.15

न धनेन भवेन्मोक्षः कर्मणा प्रजया न वा ।

त्यागमात्रेण कित्वेके यतयोऽश्नन्ति चामृतम् ॥ I.1.15

has the Bṛhadāraṇyaka II.4.2 and III.5 as the basis.

...अमृतत्वस्य न आशास्ति वित्तेन इति । II.4.2

...तमात्मानं विदित्वा ब्राह्मणाः पुत्रैषणायाश्च वित्तैषणायाश्च

लोकैषणायाश्च व्युत्थायाथ भिक्षाचर्यं चरन्ति । III.5

Again the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.5.5 has a part

यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते...

which is identical with Kena I.3, 4; and Taittiriya II.9.

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.7.1

य एष देवः कथितः यस्मिन् ज्ञाते विमुच्यते ।

has as its source the Śvetāśvatara 6.10 and 13

एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः and ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ।

In the same chapter III.7, the 10th verse is

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्हृष्टे परावरे ॥ III.7.10

which is identical with the Muṇḍaka II.2.8.

In the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.114.14

सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म नित्यम्

and in IV.11.46

संपूर्णं खल्विदं ब्रह्म जगद्ब्रह्मैव केवलम् ।

are based on the famous *mahāvākyas* of the Upaniṣads.

Again the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa IV.37.7

येन शब्दं रसं रूपं गन्धं जानासि राघव ।

सोऽयमात्मा परं ब्रह्म सर्वमापूर्य संस्थितः ॥ IV.37.7

is based on the Kaṭha II.1.3

येन रूपं रसं गन्धं शब्दस्पर्शाश्च संयुतान् ।

एतेनैव विजानाति किमत्र परिशिष्यते एतद्वै तत् ॥ II.1.3.

Further the Kaṭha I.3.14

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया दुर्गा पथस्तत्कवयो वदन्ति ॥ I.3.14

forms the basis of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa IV.46.23

क्षुरधाराप्रमितया धिया परमधीरया ।

प्रविचार्यात्मनस्तत्त्वं ततः स्वपदमाविश ॥ IV.46.23.

Again the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa V.13.5 makes use of the Muṇḍaka II.2.8 *tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare...*

The famous Chāndogya passage VI.1.3

येनाश्रुतं श्रुतं भवति अमृतं मतं अविज्ञातं etc.

is responsible both for the construction and idea in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa V.35.19

अस्मिन्हृष्टे जगद्दृष्टं श्रुतेऽस्मिन् सकलं श्रुतम् ।

स्पृष्टे चास्मिन् जगत्स्पृष्टं स्थितेऽस्मिन् संस्थितं जगत् ॥ V.35.19.

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VIa.34.30

समस्तं मुनिवं शान्तमतीतं वाग्विलासतः ।

ओमित्यस्य च तन्मात्रा तुर्या सा परमागतिः ॥ VIa.34.30

is evidently based on the Māṇḍūkya 12

अमात्रश्चतुर्थोऽव्यवहार्यः प्रपञ्चोपशमः शिवोऽद्वैत एवमोङ्कार आत्मैव
संविशत्यात्मनात्मानं य एवं वेद य एवं वेद ।

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka is expressly mentioned in

एवं स्वरूपं जीवस्य बृहदारण्यकादिषु ।
बहुधा बहुषु प्रोक्तं वेदान्तेषु किलानघ ॥ V.71.57.

The Śvetāśvatara III.16 is verbatim taken up as the V.R. VIb.14.9

सर्वतः पाणिपादान्तं तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।
सर्वतः श्रुतिमहोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥

Towards the close again the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa closes on a very frank Upaniṣadic note by taking up the Chāndogya III.14.1 in its VIb.216.25

यत्सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म तज्जलानिति च स्फुटम् ।
श्रुत्वा ह्युदीर्यते साम्नि तस्मै ब्रह्मात्मने नमः ॥ VIb.216.25

It will thus be seen how throughout very important passages from the earlier Upaniṣads have been taken up by the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. What is still more worth-noticing is that all these passages have very great doctrinal significance and are practically the *mahāvākyas* of not only of the Upaniṣads but of the Vedānta philosophy. In the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa also they have been used for doctrinal purposes and the author has tried to honour and abide by these texts so far as his fundamental position allows him. Resting on such texts for some of the very important doctrines of the Upaniṣads, the first *prasthāna* of the Vedānta, it is no wonder if the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa bears similarity and occasional identity with the Bhagavadgītā and Gauḍapāda-Kārikās which in their kernel have an Upaniṣadic core.

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has similarities with the later Upaniṣads as well. Dr. Atreya has pointed out all the parallels in his work. He prefaces his study with the remarks : "A number of the minor Upaniṣads take their material wholly or partially, very often verbatim from the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha... It is very difficult to find out what has been borrowed from such a huge work when there is no index of the work available. The following is the general account which is supported by detailed tables of the identical *ślokas*."

Almost all the six chapters of the Mahā-Upaniṣad except the first which is in prose; all the five chapters but the introductory portion of the Annapūrṇā Upaniṣad; almost the whole of the Akṣi Upaniṣad; the second which is the main chapter of the Mukti-kōpaniṣad; 50 ślokaś of the Bṛhat-sannyāsa-Upaniṣad; 18 ślokaś of the Śāṇḍilya Upaniṣad; 10 ślokaś of the Yājñavalkya Upaniṣad; 3 ślokaś of the Yogakunḍali Upaniṣad and probably one śloka of the Paingalopaniṣad seem to have been taken verbatim from the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha as would appear from the following tables :

1. THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

II.1.8, 10
 III.80.4, 7
 III.81.2, 3
 II.1.11-34
 I.3.16
 I.3.6, 8, 15
 II.2.5, 8
 V.16.18, 21, 11, 19
 V.74.33, 36; V.75.52
 V.91.81
 VIa.115.12, 13, 15, 37, 38, 28, 25,
 33, 16, 24, 20, 21
 III.9.12-15, 47-50, 75
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 I.12.4, 5, 7-9, 16, 21, 26
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II.2.59, 61, 67	IV.2-4
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III.3.25	IV.50
III.4.39, 42-44	IV.51, 52
III.4.44, 58	IV.53, 54
III.5.3-5	IV.55, 57
III.17.10, 12, 13	IV.58, 60
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III.20.9, 10	IV.64, 65
III.84.36	IV.66
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- III.114.3-5, 7, 8, 12, 14, 15, 16-18,
23, 29, 31, 34, 51, 53, 60, 61,
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 V.18.61; V.20.37
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 VI.63-71
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 VI.73-76
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 VI.77, 78
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2. The Annapūrṇā Upaniṣad : This consists of 337 *ślokas*. Except the first 17 *ślokas*, almost the whole of it is taken from books V and VIa of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha. Here is the detailed study.

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 VIa.117.9, 10, 11
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 V.56.7, 17-19, 30, 31, 33, 34,
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VIa.69.18-20, 40, 45, 47	V.49-53
VIa.78.32-34	V.55, 56
VIa.26.8, 12, 14, 16, 20	V.57-60
VIa.25.26	V.62
VIa.93.44	V.63
VIa.111.36, 40	V.65, 66
VIa.113.20	V.67
VIa.117.14	V.68
VIa.118.7	V.69
VIa.119.8	V.70
VIa.120.1	V.71
VIa.120.1-10, 12-16, 22	V.81-95
VIa.122.4-8, 11	V.96-101
VIa.123.6-8, 10, 11	V.102-106
VIa.124.23-27	V.107-111
VIa.125.1-2, 4-8	V.112-118

3. The Mukṭikopaniṣad : The second *adhyāya* consisting of about 76 *śloka*s, which is the main portion of the Upaniṣad, has been taken from the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha. It acknowledges its indebtedness when it begins these *śloka*s with the words *atra ślokā bhavanti* but does not mention from where it takes these *śloka*s. All the *śloka*s collected here bear on desire and its control for the attainment of liberation. They are so unsystematically arranged that it is very difficult to find out their source in the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha. We have, however, succeeded in identifying most of them as would appear from the following table :

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

THE MUKTIKOPANIṢAD

II.5.4	II.1
II.9.25-27, 30-33, 35, 38	II.3-9
V.92.16, 17, 18, 22, 23	II.10-14
V.34.32, 28	II.16-17
V.57.19, 26-28	II.18-21
V.91.35, 48, 53, 54	II.25-27
V.91.37	II.29
II.9.41, 42	II.30, 31

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V.90.4, 11, 16, 18, 20, 23
 V.9.55, 56
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 IV.24.8-10
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 V.91.29-32
 I.3.11, 12
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 II.39
 II.40
 II.42
 II.43, 44
 II.45-47
 II.48
 II.51, 52
 II.57, 60
 II.61, 62
 II.68-71
 II.76

4. The Varāhopaniṣad : The fourth of the five *adhyāyas* of this Upaniṣad contains about 30 *ślokas* from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. They deal with the seven stages of Self-realisation and the character of a liberated living man. They are identified as shown below.

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

III.118.5, 6, 8-15
 VIa.126.52, 60-69
 III.9.4, 6-9, 11, 13

THE VARĀHOPANIṢAD

IV.1-10
 IV.11-18
 IV.21-27

5. The Akṣi Upaniṣad : It is a small Upaniṣad dealing with the seven stages of Self-realisation. It consists of about 50 *ślokas* of which 40 are found in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in a chapter which contains more of the same type.

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

VIa.126.98, 99, 8-30, 32, 33,
 36, 38, 41, 42, 58-68, 70, 71

THE AKṢI UPANIṢAD

2-41

6. The Bṛhatsannyāsopaniṣad : This Upaniṣad deals with *sannyāsa* (renunciation). In its description of the Self-realisation of a Sannyāsin it utilises 47 *ślokas* of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa picked up from several chapters, one line from here, one line from there, which makes it very difficult to identify them, as will appear from the following table.

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA	THE BRHATSANNYĀSOPANIṢAD
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V.35.4, 11, 38, 39, 77, 78, 81	
V.39.47, 48, 49	
V.40.19	
V.42.14, 15	
V.50.21, 22, 29, 34, 35, 39, 42	
V.51.31, 33, 35	
V.53.67, 75, 78, 79	

7. The Śāṇḍilyopaniṣad : This Upaniṣad selects 18 *ślokas* from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa on the control of the mind through the control of the vital airs.

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA	THE ŚĀṆḌILYOPANIṢAD
V.78.8, 15, 16, 18-21, 25, 27-31, 39	I.7.24-36

8. The Maitreyī Upaniṣad : There seem to be several *ślokas* of this Upaniṣad identical with those of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. We could, however, identify only the following:

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA	THE MAITREYĪ UPANIṢAD
III.9.47	I.10
VIa.126.38, 39	II.27
III.117.9	II.30

9. The Yājñavalkyopaniṣad : Out of the 24 *ślokas* of the Upaniṣad 10 are from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa :

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA	THE YĀJÑAVALKYOPANIṢAD
I.21.1, 2, 5, 6, 11, 12, 18, 20, 23, 35	5-14

10. The Yogakuṇḍalī Upaniṣad : There are only two *ślokas* identical with those of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in this Upaniṣad :

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA	THE YOGAKUNḌALĪ
III.9.47	III.24
III.9.14	III.34

11. The Paīṅgala Upaniṣad : So far we have been able to

indentify only one *śloka* of this Upaniṣad with one in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa :

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

III.9.14

THE PAIṆGALA UPANIṢAD

III.11

It may also be noted here that there are several others of the Minor Upaniṣads in which although we have not been able to discover *ślokas* exactly identical with those of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, yet the theme and language are very much similar to those of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. The following portions of these Upaniṣads compare very well with similar portions of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

1. The section on Samādhi in the Jābāladarśanopaniṣad.
2. *Ślokas* IV.1-11 of the Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad.
3. *Ślokas* 1-5 on the nature of the mind in the Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad.
4. I.34-37; I.59, 60; IV-whole; VI.58, 59-64 of the Yoga-śikhā Upaniṣad.
5. V.1-19 of the Tripura-tāpinī Upaniṣad.
6. The whole of the Tejobindu Upaniṣad.
7. II.12-16 of the Saubhāgya-lakṣmī Upaniṣad.

After this critical study Dr. Atreya proceeds to state his conclusions as follows :

“The main reasons why we should think that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is not the borrower from these Upaniṣads are the following :

1. In these Upaniṣads there are many *ślokas* which are common to several of them, but which occur in different contexts in the Upaniṣads and sometimes in unsuitable contexts, whereas in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa they occur in their proper places. Some of the same *ślokas* of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa occurring in many Minor Upaniṣads are shown in the following table :

THE V.R.	THE MAHĀ.	THE ANNAPŪRṆĀ.
V.74.33, 36	II.47	II.25, 26
V.91.81	II.48	IV.69
V.59.32	IV.10	I.47
III.7.10	IV.82	IV.31

THE V.R.	THE MUKTIKA.	THE ANNAPŪRNĀ.		
V.90.4	II.32	IV.14		
V.90.16	II.34 half	IV.16		
V.90.18	II.34 half	IV.17		
V.90.20	II.35 half	IV.18		
V.90.23	II.35 half	IV.19		
V.91.37	II.29	IV.48		
V.91.14	II.48	IV.41		
V.91.29	II.57	IV.46		
V.92.17	II.10	IV.83		
V.92.22	II.13	IV.84		
V.92.34	II.43	IV.90		
THE V.R.	THE MAHĀ.	THE VARĀHA.		
III.118.5-15	V.24-34	IV.1-10		
THE V.R.	THE MAHĀ.	THE MAITREYĪ.		
III.117.9	V.6	II.30		
THE V.R.	THE MAHĀ.	THE MAITREYĪ.	THE YOGAKUṆḌALI.	
III.9.47	II.65	I.10	III.24, 25	
V.R.	MAHĀ.	MUKTIKA.	PAIṆGALA.	YOGAKUṆḌALI.
III.9.14	II.63	II.76	III.11	III.34
IV.23.58	V.75	II.42		
THE V.R.	THE MAHĀ.	THE YĀJÑAVALKYA.		
I.21.1, 2, 5, 6, 11, 12, 18, 20, 23, 35	III.39-48	5-15		
THE V.R.	THE MAHĀ.	THE MUKTIKA.		
IV.24.8-10	V.77, 78	II.40, 41		
IV.35.18	V.97, 98	II.39		
THE V.R.	THE VARĀHA.	THE AKṢI.		
VIa.126.60-67	IV.12-17	31-39		

2. The *ślokas* found in the Upaniṣads are apparently selections made from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, because the places from which they are selected abound in many more *ślokas* of the same theme.

3. The philosophy expounded in all of these Upaniṣads is one or

the other aspect of the philosophy of Vāsiṣṭha which is not completely represented even in all of them taken together.

4. No attempt is made in the Upaniṣads to rearrange the *ślokas* in a systematic order. Very often they occur in the order of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which is made worse by the fact that the *ślokas* are not found in their proper context.

5. Almost all these Upaniṣads lack in the character of being very old. None of them probably existed before the time of Śaṅkara, whereas it seems that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is a pre-Śaṅkara work.

6. Some of the *ślokas* of these Upaniṣads are not found in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in identically the same form but curiously, they occur in that Laghu-Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha, which shows that either the authors of these Upaniṣads have used this summary of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha or some other version of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha different from the available one, from which the Laghu-Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha was selected.

Dr. Atreya has been quoted here in extenso and his very valuable tables are taken here with a very deep sense of gratitude. But it is only the tables that are accepted and by no means his conclusions. Indeed the more one thinks and looks at these tables one comes exactly to the opposite conclusions to those to which Dr. Atreya comes. It is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa that is the borrower and certainly not the Upaniṣads. The reasons which lead to this conclusion are as given under :

1. The Buddhistic tendencies of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa are too obvious. There is not only a very great doctrinal similarity in idealism but Buddha himself is recognised as an *avatāra* and is the ideal before Rāma. Dr. Atreya thinks the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to be a pre-Gauḍapāda work, while he thinks the Upaniṣads to belong to a post-Śaṅkara period. Now what was the attitude of Brahmanical philosophical thought towards Buddhism from the times of Gauḍapāda to the times of Śaṅkara and perhaps a few centuries later under his influence? Though Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara have been regarded as attempting an assimilation of Buddhistic doctrines, yet the two take constant precautions to declare their distinctness from Buddha and his philosophy. Śaṅkara goes to the length of writing about the Buddha that he made philosophical matters worse and was actuated by *pradveṣo vā prajāsu* (the most unkindest out of all), to one whose

heart overflowed with the milk of human kindness. Gauḍapāda's *naitat buddhena bhāṣitam* is almost the refrain of his philosophical song. Under these circumstances is it within the range of possibility that the Upaniṣads could be created out of a work so frankly under Buddhistic influence to win recognition in the orthodox tradition. Fabricated Upaniṣads and especially based on unorthodox basis would not win a place in the orthodox list of the Upaniṣads. Furthermore, nothing in the Upaniṣads suggests that they are borrowing. True, there is the usual *atra ete ślokā bhavanti*. But what do these few words prove for the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa ? At best it is suggested that the verses prefaced with these words are older and are taken from the *sampradāya* material.

2. The circumstance that the verses are common to many Upaniṣads makes this hypothesis more likely. The verses might be coming from the floating mass of philosophical poetry current in the times. Lines of great philosophical importance like *ādaḥ ante ca yannāsti vartamāne'pi, tattathā* is found occurring in Nāgārjuna, Gauḍapāda, the Ācārānagasūtra and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Under the circumstances, it is therefore also likely that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is borrowing from the Upaniṣads.

3. The circumstance that the V.R. contains in it many more verses of a nature similar to those that are seen in the Upaniṣads also tells a different tale. It is in fact a feature of the style and method of the V.R. that it takes delight in explaining the same idea repeatedly and in different words with all the poetry and fine phrasing that it is capable of. It always amplifies a thread from the earlier sources. Dr. Dasgupta observes : "The Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha is throughout a philosophical work in the form of popular lectures, and the same idea is often repeated again and again in various kinds of expressions and poetical imagery." On many occasions the repetition is meant for explaining a point briefly stated. Thus this fact does not establish the priority of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa but rather indicates the posteriority of the same. It is not only from the Upaniṣads that the V.R. lifts lines in this manner but it has lifted lines in a similar manner from Gauḍapāda also.

4. On comparing these verses it is seen that the V.R. has a better phraseology in which the ideas are aptly conveyed and its verses

are more systematically arranged. If crudeness is an indication of antiquity in the Epic poetry it is no doubt likely to be true of the Upaniṣadic poetry. The Upaniṣads are short pieces dealing with this or that aspect and are often crude; but the V.R. is a deliberately worked out text with a very clever use of the earlier material and this is the reason why as Dr. Atreya observes, that the verses appear to be out of context in the Upaniṣads but in their proper places in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

5. Further where is the tendency to lift observed ? In the Upaniṣads or in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa ? The V.R. has lifted considerably from the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, the Bhagavadgītā and many other Sanskrit poets and works. Hence if lifting is to be suspected, it is more proper and likely to be in keeping with the facts if it is thought that the V.R. lifts. Dr. Raghavan observes in one place that while reading the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa we always feel that we are reading some lines met with before or with which we are familiar, yet we are not able to lay our finger on them. This very peculiar homely feeling of a vague familiarity is due to this noteworthy feature of the text.

6. The Upaniṣads do not give any suggestion that they are lifting or that they are based on some other source. It is the V.R. on the other hand, that declares that it is the *sāra* of all the Itihāsas. It is significant that the author of the V.R. tells us

मोक्षोपायमयीं वक्ष्ये संहितां सारनिर्मिताम् ॥ II.10.4

मोक्षोपायानिधानेयं संहिता सारसंमिता । II.17.6

मोक्षोपायकृता ग्रन्थकारेणान्येऽपि ये कृताः ।

ग्रन्थास्तेष्वियमेवंका व्यवस्था बोध्यबोधने ॥ II.18.60

and again

शास्त्राणां परमं शास्त्रं महारामायणं शुभम् ॥ III.8.8

इतिहासोत्तमावस्माच्छ्रुताद्वेधः प्रवर्तते ॥

सर्वेषामितिहासानामयं सार उदाहृतः । III.8.9

यदिहास्ति तवग्यत्र यन्नेहास्ति न तत्कचित् ।

इमं समस्तविज्ञानशास्त्रकोशं विदुर्बुधाः ॥ III.8.12

Against these very clear and expressed statements by the author, how could it be maintained that the V.R. is not the borrower ?

7. In proof of what has been said above, below are given a few lines from the Śuka episode common to the V.R. and the Mahā Upaniṣad. Identical lines need no consideration. It is to be noted that the Upaniṣad begins and narrates the story of Śuka in the usual Upaniṣadic manner without any introduction or an effort to be poetical. But in the V.R. since Mumukṣu-vyavahāra II is to begin, it is necessary for the author to narrate a life of one who was a *mumukṣu* or famous as a *mukta*. Naturally in the usual Epic manner of introducing a story, the dummy Rāma asks a precise question about Śuka and this gives Vasiṣṭha an occasion to narrate the story. Vasiṣṭha gives the story as Ātmodantasama-svavṛttāntasādṛśa. This introduction itself is striking. The Mahā Upaniṣad begins :

शुको नाम महातेजाः स्वरूपानन्दतत्परः ।

जातमात्रेण मुनिराङ् यत्सत्यं तदवाप्तवान् ॥ 2.1.

The V.R. introduces Vyāsa

योऽयमञ्जनशैलाम्भो निविष्टो हेमविष्टरे ।

पाश्वे तव पितुर्व्यासो भगवान्मास्करद्युतिः ॥

अस्यामूदिन्दुवदनस्तनयो नयकोविदः ।

शुको नाम महाप्राज्ञो यज्ञो मूर्त्येव सुस्थितः ॥ II.1.7-8.

In the V.R. the alliterations *prājño yajño, tanayaḥ naya*, and the simile *yajño mūrtyeva susthitaḥ* deserve notice as these are absent in the Upaniṣad. The Upaniṣad hurriedly adds in the second verse immediately says about the *viveka* of Śuka but the V.R. adds one verse telling us about the *vicāra* of Śuka and the consequent *viveka*.

प्रविचार्य चिरं साधु स्वात्मनिश्रयमाप्तवान् ॥ M.U. 2.

The V.R. gives this as

प्रविचार्य चिरं चारु यत्सत्यं तदवाप्तवान् ॥ II.1.10.

Again in the V.R. the poetical *ciraṁ cāru* deserves notice as well as the propriety in *vicārya satyaṁ āptavān* as against the account of the Upaniṣad. Again

केवलं विररमास्य चेतो विषयचापलम् । M.U. 13.

The V.R. is

केवलं विररमास्य चेतो विगतचापलम् । II.1.12.

The Upaniṣadic *viṣayacāpalam* gives no meaning besides being

grammatically unsound while *vigatacāpalam* improves the line being appropriate in the context :

स शुक्रः स्वकया बुद्ध्या न वाक्यं बहु मन्यते । M.U. 17.

The V.R. is

स शुक्रः शुभया बुद्ध्या न वाक्यं बहुमन्यत । II.1.16.

In the V.R. the alliteration in *śukhaḥ śubhayā* and the change in *amanyata* deserves to be noticed.

जनको नाम भूपालो विद्यते मिथिलापुरे । M.U. 19.

The V.R. is

जनको नाम भूपालो विद्यते वसुधातले । II.1.18.

The V.R. has alliteration in *vidyate vasudhātale*. The hint about the word might have been given by the *vasudhātalam* in the next verse in the Upaniṣad.

ते भोगास्तानि भोज्यानि व्यासपुत्रस्य तन्मनः ॥ M.U. 26.

The V.R. is

ते भोगास्तानि दुःखानि व्यासपुत्रस्य तन्मनः ॥ II.1.25.

The Upaniṣadic *bhojya* merely agrees with *bhogyā* but is not appropriate, but *duḥkhāni* refers to the insult and indifference shown by Janaka. *Bhoga* and *duḥkha* immediately do bring in higher philosophy, by introducing the famous *dvandva* :

संपूर्ण इव शीतांशुरतिष्ठदमलः शुक्रः । M.U. 27.

The V.R. is

अतिष्ठत्स शुक्रस्तत्र संपूर्ण इव चन्द्रमाः ॥ II.1.10, 26.

The V.R. has simply recast the line with *candramā* instead of *śītāṁsu* and the effect is at once a line in itself having alliterations and softly agreeing with the first line as well predominated by the liquid *m*.

The Upaniṣadic narrative further proceeds to deal with the instruction given by Janaka to Śuka while the V.R. stops and does not give the instruction.

In the light of this comparative study of the lines it could be asserted that as a rule the V.R. composition is better and more appropriate while the Upaniṣad is crude and simple. Even remembering very well the controversy about the marring or refining of a verse in the context of the discussion about the *Mṛcchakatika* and *Daridra-Cārudatta* there is no doubt that the fact emerges from the

comparative study of the Śuka episode in the Mahā Upaniṣad and the V.R. that the latter is in all probability a working up of older material. Therefore, these identical verses do not prove anything in favour of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa; but it is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa that furnishes the upper limit for the dates of these later Upaniṣads. All this discussion will also unfold the relation of the V.R. and the *jñānakāṇḍa* works, the Upaniṣads, earlier as well as later, the first *prasthāna* of the Vedānta.

The relation of the V.R. and the second *prasthāna* of the Vedānta is not so close and this is as is to be expected. Bādarāyaṇa who tried to formulate and evolve a system out of the Upaniṣads was not a bold and free thinker. He had his limitations as well as limits. The *dr̥ṣṭāntas* of metaphysical importance that he gives indicate that he inclined to the Bhedābheda view, as for instance *ubhayavyapadeśāt ahikuṇḍalavat* (III.2.27). He was not an idealist and so neither could he describe the world as *mithyā* for he speaks of its *janma* (I.1.2) nor could he trace it to the activity of the mind and hence did not accept the analogy of a dream for the world as given by the Buddhists for he says *vaidharmyāt ca na svapnādivat* (II.2.29). On the other hand even when faced with obtruse problems he refused to make any effort to offer a solution but rested content with tracing the difficulty to the Śrutis. Thus in *kr̥stnaprasakti-niravayavaśabdakopa* he closes the argument with *śruteṣu śabdāmūlatvāt* (II.1.27). It appears from his *sūtras* like *adhikaṁ tu bhedanirdeśāt* (II.1.22), that he did not feel inclined to accept the identity of the soul and the Highest Reality. This summary of Bādarāyaṇa's view has been given only to show how the V.R. with its almost extreme and uncompromising idealism had very little use of a work of the nature of the Bādarāyaṇa Sūtras.

This will be clear from the fact that in one place (IV.39) the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa touches a point of discussion which Bādarāyaṇa also raised in his *Vilakṣaṇatvādhikaraṇa* (II.1.4-12). The argument of the Pūrvapakṣin in Bādarāyaṇa is that the world is *vilakṣaṇa* from Brahman inasmuch as it is *acetana*, *aśuddha* and *sukha-duḥkha-mohātmaka* while the Brahman is *cetana*, *śuddha* and *ānandātmaka*. Hence on account of this diversity there cannot exist *prakṛti-vikāra-bhāva* between the two. In the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa it is said that by Rāma who raises the *saṁkā* and so is just the Pūrvapakṣin

यदि चायमारम्भो ब्रह्मण आपतितस्तदनेन तत्सदृशेनैव भवितव्यम् ।

यो यस्माज्जायते स तत्सदृश एव भवति ।

यथा दीपादीपः पुरुषात्पुरुषः सस्यात्सस्यम् ।

यतो निर्विकाराद्यदागतं निर्विकारेणैवानेन भवितव्यम् ॥ IV.39.9-12

and to this the reply of Vasiṣṭha, the Siddhāntin is that

अथैतद्व्यतिरिक्तं चिदात्मनस्तन्निष्कलङ्कस्य परमेश्वरस्य येयं

कलङ्कापत्तिरित्याकर्ण्य भगवान् ब्रह्मर्षिरवाच ।

ब्रह्मैवेदं स्थितं नाम मलमस्तीह नानघ ।

तरङ्गीघर्गणैरम्भः सिन्धौ स्फुरति नो रजः ॥

द्वितीया कल्पनैवेह न रघूद्वह विद्यते ।

ब्रह्ममात्रादृते ब्रह्मावौष्ण्यमात्रादृते यथा ॥ IV.39.13-15.

Rāma is not satisfied and asks again

निर्दुःखं ब्रह्म निर्द्वन्द्वं तज्जं दुःखमयं जगत् ।

अस्पष्टार्थमिदं ब्रह्मन् वेद्मि वचनं तव ॥ IV.39.16

and then this is followed by a detailed statement of the doctrine of *māyā*.

The different treatment of the problem deserves to be noticed. Another fact which is both interesting and instructive, is that the *dr̥ṣṭāntas* cited by the Pūrvapakṣin and the Siddhāntin are quite different. In a similar manner, the celebrated *dr̥ṣṭānta* of the spider, Ūrṇanābha is given in an altogether different context. This *dr̥ṣṭānta* is given by the V.R. to explain the *vaicitrya* or *vilakṣaṇatva*, a topic discussed by Bādarāyaṇa, thus

ऊर्णनाभाद्यथा तन्तुर्जायते चेतनाजडः ।

नित्यप्रबुद्धात्पुरुषाद्ब्रह्मणः प्रकृतिस्तथा ॥ III.96.71.

Śaṅkara cites this *dr̥ṣṭānta* under Bādarāyaṇa's *devādivadapi loke* (II.1.25) to prove that there can be creation without any external aid, *bāhyam sādhanam* or *upasaṁhāra*. This *dr̥ṣṭānta* originally occurs in the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad to prove that the creation is natural

यस्तूर्णनाम इव तन्तुभिः प्रधानजैः स्वभावतः ।

देव एकः स्वभाववृणोति स नो दवानु ब्रह्माभ्ययम् ॥ VI.10.

Thus it would appear that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has very little or nothing to do with the Sūtras of Bādarāyaṇa; and the peculiar use

of *dṛṣṭāntas* might indicate that it is following a different Upaniṣadic work or tradition.

The relation of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the Bhagavadgītā, the third *prasthāna* of the Vedānta, has already been discussed in details and it has been shown to what a great extent the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is indebted to that work. If the Bhagavadgītā is based on the Iśāvāsyā Upaniṣad, to that extent the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is also based on that Upaniṣad so far as the philosophy of *tena tyaktena bhuñjīthāḥ* and the emphasis on *karman* are considered. But then the V.R. is not so much interested in the analysis of the *karman*, *akarma* and *vikarma* or the nature of *sannyāsa* as it is quite enamoured of the topic of the *sthitaprajña*, an ideal which it is never tired of recommending. The difference in the metaphysical position of the two works is also striking. The Bhagavadgītā is frankly theistic and pantheistic too. But it has not the idealism of the Śaṅkara type, not to speak of the V.R. brand. Similarly, it is free from Buddhistic influence while the V.R. is not so. Yet with all this, the author of the V.R. is under a very direct spell of the Bhagavadgītā, lines and phrases from which are simply at his service. The spirit of synthesis is common to both and the two texts have carried out a synthesis of the contemporary philosophical thought. In its last phase when the V.R. was being revised, composed and given a shape, it is quite likely and more than a probability that it is the Bhagavadgītā, the third *prasthāna* of the orthodox Vedānta that must have inspired the author and served as a model to be copied. In Kāśmīr, the Bhagavadgītā was understood as teaching the *jñāna-karma-samuccaya* as could be seen from the fact of the very title of the commentary by Ānandavardhana on the Gītā, and so it is also likely that it was in Kāśmīr that another work teaching *jñāna-karma-samuccaya* was brought into being.

After this discussion of the relation of the V.R. with the *Prasthānatrayī* the next work to claim the attention of a critical student of this text is the *Māṇḍūkyakārikā* of Gauḍapāda. Dr. Atreya has noticed the following parallels between the two works.

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

THE MĀṆḌŪKYAKĀRIKĀ

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| 1. समस्तं कल्पनामात्रमिदम्* । VIb.210.11 | II.14 |
| 2. संकल्पकचित्तं सर्वमेवं स्वप्नवदात्मनः* । III.101.35 | II.15 |

3. मनोमनननिर्माणमात्रमेतज्जगत्त्रयम्* । IV.11.23 III.31
4. संकल्पाद्विविधार्थत्वं चित्स्पन्दो याति सृष्टिषु* । III.67.10 IV.47
5. सस्पन्दे समुदेतीव निःस्पन्दान्तर्गतेव च* । IV.47
इयं यस्मिञ्जगल्लक्ष्मीरलात इव चक्रता ॥ III.9.58
अलातृवत्* । VIb.60.61
6. मायामात्रदृशो भ्रान्तिः शून्याः स्वप्नानुभूतयः* । III.51.54 II.31
यथा गन्धर्वनगरं तथा संसृतिविभ्रमः* । VIa.33.45
7. जाग्रत्स्वप्नदशाभेदो न स्थिरास्थिरते विना* । II.5
समः सदैव सर्वत्र समस्तोऽनुभवोऽनयोः ॥ IV.19.11
8. दिक्कालाद्यनवच्छिन्नमात्मतत्त्वं स्वशक्तितः* । II.12
लीलया तत्तदादत्ते दिक्कालकलितं वपुः ॥ IV.44.4
9. चिद्रूपस्यात्मतत्त्वस्य स्वभाववशतः स्वयम्* । II.16
मनाक्संवेदनमिव यत्तज्जीव इति स्मृतम् ॥ III.64.11
अनन्तस्यात्मतत्त्वस्य सर्वशक्तेर्महात्मनः ।
संकल्पशक्तिरचितं यद्रूपं तन्मनो विदुः ॥ III.96.3
मनस्तामिव यातेन ब्रह्मणा तन्यते जगत् । III.9.29
10. तस्या दृश्यात्मतत्त्वस्य विस्मृत्यैव गतं स्थितिम् । VIa.114.3 II.19
11. प्रतिभासमुपायाति यद्यदस्य हि चेतसः* । II.29
तत्तत्प्रकटतामेति स्थैर्यं सफलतामपि ॥ III.91.17
12. आदावन्ते च यन्नास्ति वर्तमानेऽपि तत्तथा । IV.45.45 II.6
13. बुद्धानामस्मदादीनां न किञ्चिन्नाम जायते । VIb.146.18 III.48
जगन्नाम्ना न चोत्पन्नं न चास्ति न च दृश्यते । III.70.40
14. न चाविकारमजरं सविकारं क्षयाद्वेते* । VIb.195.14 IV.7, 9
नान्यार्त्तिकचित्संभवति तदुत्थं यत्तदेव तत् । IV.40.34
यादृशाद्यन्तयोर्वस्तु तादृशेव तदुच्यते । VIa.49.7
आत्मा त्वाद्यन्तमध्येषु समः सर्वत्र सर्वदा ।
स्वमप्यन्यत्वमायाति नात्मतत्त्वं कदाचन ॥ VIa.49.8
15. इदं बीजेऽङ्कुर इव दृश्यमस्ति महाशये* । IV.20
ब्रूते य एवमज्ञत्वमेतत्तस्यास्ति शैशवम् ॥ IV.1.21
16. इयन्मात्रपरिच्छिन्नो येनात्मा भव्यभाविताः* । IV.82
स सर्वज्ञोऽपि सर्वत्र परां कृपणतां गतः ॥ IV.27.22

17. यथा रज्वामहिभ्रान्तिर्विनश्यत्यवलोकनात् । II.18
तयैतत्प्रेक्षणाच्छान्तिमेति संसारदुःखिता ॥ II.17.9
18. चित्सत्तैव जगत्सत्ता...एकाभावाद्वयोनोऽशः* । IV.17.19 III.31
19. संसारस्यास्य दुःखस्य सर्वोपद्रवदायिनः । III.40
उपाय एक एवास्ति मनसः स्वस्य निग्रहः ॥ IV.35.2

This list would be complete only after the following parallels, perhaps of greater doctrinal importance are added to it. The lines in the V.R. given below have either identical lines or parallel ones or have some basis in Gauḍapāda. Thus

कार्यकारणता तेन स शब्दो न च वास्तवः । III.21.23
तस्मान्नेवाविचारोऽस्ति नाविद्यास्ति न बन्धनम् ।
न मोक्षोस्ति निराबाधं शुद्धबोधमिदं जगत् ॥ III.21.72
असत्त्वादेव चास्माकं शशशृङ्गमिवानघ ।
आदावेव हि यन्नास्ति वर्तमानेऽपि तत्तथा । III.23.9b,10a
यथा स्वप्नस्तथा जाग्रद्विदं नास्त्यत्र संशयः । III.57.50
न द्वैतं नैव चाद्वैतं न च बीजं न चाङ्कुरः । III.81.98
सर्वेव ब्रह्मसत्तेयमित्येषा परमार्थता । IV.35.37
अलातचक्रे स्वप्ने च भ्रमे वा केव भावना । IV.56.21
अलातचक्रप्रतिमाः सर्परज्जुभ्रमोपमाः । V.82.22
कारणमावतो राजन्पिता नाम न विद्यते । VIa.94.61
सर्वदर्शनसिद्धान्ते नास्ति भेदो न वस्तुनि ।
परमार्थमये तेन विवादेन किमत्र नः ॥ VIb.52.20
मनःषष्ठेन्द्रियातीतं मनःषष्ठेन्द्रियात्मनः ।
साकारस्य निराकारं कथं भवति कारणम् ॥
बीजात्कारणतः कार्यमङ्कुरः किल जायते ।
न बीजमपि यत्रास्ति तत्र स्यादङ्कुरः कुतः ॥
कारणेन विना कार्यं न च नामोपपद्यते ।
कदा क इव खे केन दृष्टो लब्धः स्फुटो द्रुमः ॥ VIb.57.11-13
तद्ब्रह्म खं विदुर्द्वैतमद्वैताद्वैतमेव च ।
सर्ग एव परं ब्रह्म द्वैतमद्वैतमेव सत् ।
नेति नेति विनिर्णय सर्वतोऽभिभवत्यपि । VIb.162.44, 45a

With these passages can be compared the Māṇḍūkya-kārikās IV.47, 55, 61-65, 33. 5; II.32 as well as the discussion of the *kārya-*

kāraṇabhāva in the same work.

To turn to Dr. Atreya's conclusions from the evidence that he has collected : "The problem before us now is : who is the earlier of the two, author of the *Kārikās* or of the *Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa* ? The problem is no doubt a difficult one, yet there are certain reasons which convince us of the priority of the V.R. to the *Kārikās*.

1. The *Kārikās* are offered as a sort of commentary on the *Maṇḍūkyopaniṣad* and are not written as an independent work on the Advaita philosophy. They mean to interpret the *Upaniṣad* from the standpoint of a particular school of thought. Gauḍapāda does not claim to give us an original philosophy of his own. He gives an indication of the pre-existence of thinkers with whom he agrees and whom he follows. They are referred to as *vedānteṣu vicakṣaṇāḥ* (II.31), *tattvavidāḥ* (II. 34), *nāyakāḥ* (IV.98) and as *buddhaḥ* (IV.88) as distinguished from the Buddhists whom he has called as *bauddhaḥ* (IV.19, 100). What is to be specially noticed in this connection is that the views attributed to these thinkers are found in the V.R. almost identically.

2. On the other hand the philosopher Vasiṣṭha in the V.R. claims to have received the doctrines directly from Brahman and to have realised the truth of them in his own experience (II. 10). The philosophy of Vasiṣṭha includes in itself all the views which the *Kārikās* refer to as pre-existing, such as the illusoriness—*māyā*—of the world compared to *gandharvanagara*, *svapna*, magical show etc. and the doctrine of *ajāti*.

3. The *Kārikās* represent a later phase of the Advaita philosophy than the *Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa*, when it tended to become critical, hostile and polemical towards other schools of thought that were contemporary. The V.R. on the other hand, represents the earlier phase when the Advaita philosophy existed in harmony with its sister philosophies, looking at them all from a higher point of view wherein all contradictions are harmonised. In this respect the V.R. is nearer the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavadgītā* than the *Māṇḍūkyakārikās* or the writings of Śaṅkara. VIb.38.4; III.96.51-53; VIb.130.2; V.87.18-20 are some of the places where the catholicity, reconciliatory tendency and harmonising spirit of the V.R. is seen. This spirit was later revived by Vijñānabhikṣu under the inspiration of the V.R.

4. A monistic philosophy with the *vivarta* doctrine existed in the pre-Śaṅkara period as Bhavabhūti in URC III.47; VI.6 refers to these theories. *Vivarta* is a word which is found neither in the Upaniṣads nor in the Bhagavadgītā. Gauḍapāda too does not seem to have used it. However the word and simile occur in several places in the V.R. hence its priority to the Kārikās of Gauḍapāda.

Prof. Vidhusekhara Bhattacharya¹ has studied all these arguments and examined them briefly observing : "I do not see that I can follow the above arguments. For supposing that the Kārikās are a sort of commentary and Vasiṣṭha received his doctrines directly from Brahmā, are we in any way justified in thinking that the V.R. is prior to the Kārikās ? Does it follow from that ?" As regards the third argument of Dr. Atreya he thinks that the Advaita philosophy as represented in the Kārikās is of a later phase because it is critical, hostile and polemical towards other systems. But one may ask here : Is there anything in the Kārikās that may be regarded as critical, hostile and polemical ? If so, what and where is it so ? On the contrary, one may find there—III.17; IV. 3-6—clear non-hostility—*avirodha*—and there is no instance of anything that is critical and polemical. If, however, the mention of different views in Kārikās is meant thereby, the case is the same also with the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. (III.62.10-11; 84. 22-27).

It is not always safe to conclude the priority or posteriority of one of two works simply on the ground of finding the same or similar passage, or thought, occurring in both of them. For instance we read the following in the Kārikās II.6 and IV.31 :

Ādāvante ca yannāsti vartamāne'pi tattathā.

The same line occurs in the V.R. also in IV.45.45 and a similar one in III.11.13. Now apart from the question of the date of the Kārikās, can we determine with any amount of certainty the priority or posteriority of the two works, unless we take into consideration the other factors which are connected with this problem ? One may be referred here to the Mūla-Mādhymikakārikā and the Ācārāṅgasūtra in which works the same thought appears expressed in slightly different words, and these works are undisputably far earlier than the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Now, if we see that Gauḍapāda has abundantly drawn upon such earlier works, can we ever think in this or similar cases that

1. The Āgamaśāstra of Gauḍapāda, pp. lxxxvi-lxxxviii.

he has borrowed from the V.R. unless there is any strong ground for doing so ? When there are two texts containing the same thing, one earlier and the other later, one may quote from either of them; but to decide definitely as to from which one it has actually done so, would require a more careful discussion.

Another instance of what is common to both the Kārikās and the V.R., as noted by Dr. Atreya, is the non-difference between the states of wakefulness and dream, *jāgrat* and *suṣupta* as found in the Kārikās II.5 and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa IV.9.11 and followings verses. Here too when we see that the first half of the Kārikās refers to the Bṛhadāraṇyaka (IV.3-14), upon which, just as upon other Upaniṣads, Gauḍapāda draws so much, as is evident from the work itself, how can we think that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is here the source of the Kārikās ? On the contrary, a careful perusal of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa will at once show that, in his answer to the question put to him by Rāma about the difference between wakefulness and dream, Vasiṣṭha has written a number of *ślokas*—IV.19.9 and following and attempted thereby to explain what is very briefly stated in the Kārikās. Does this fact point to the priority or posteriority of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to the Gauḍapāda Kārikās ?

Dr. Dasgupta does not study the textual parallels but observes :

“The views of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa so much resemble those of the idealistic school of Buddhists, that the whole work seems to be a Brahmanic modification of idealistic Buddhism. One other important instance can be given of such tendency to assimilate Buddhist idealism and modify it on Brahmanic lines, viz., the writings of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara. I am, therefore, inclined to think that the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa was probably a contemporary of Gauḍapāda or Śaṅkara, about A.D. 800 or a century anterior to them (Vol. II, p. 231). I do not know of any Hindu writer previous to Gauḍapāda who attempted to give an exposition of the monistic doctrine (apart from the Upaniṣads) either by writing a commentary as did Śaṅkara, or by writing an independent work as did Gauḍapāda (Vol. I, p.422).”

Thus there appear to be three positions taken up by these scholars with regard to this problem of the relation of the V.R. and the Kārikās. Dr. Atreya takes the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to be earlier while Dr. Dasgupta in his way suggests the two to be contemporary or

perhaps the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to be later by a century at the most. Dr. Bhattacharya with his very balanced textual criticism also suggests the fact that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is later. What is likely to be the truth in the matter ?

All the arguments that have been put forth while discussing the relation of the Minor Upaniṣads and the V.R. have to be made here in this case also, of the relation of the V.R. and the Kārikās. In view of the fact that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is a *saṁhitā sārānirmitā* and for other definite reasons belongs to a much later period, there cannot be any doubt that if any lifting has been done, it is by the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. The lines from Gauḍapāda occur in the course of discussion and then are followed by their amplification. Further the Buddhistic influence is more pronounced in the V.R. than in Gauḍapāda. The discussion regarding the relation of the V.R. and the three *prasthānas* has made clear the fact that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa also is essentially a Brahmanical text. Just as the Kārikās have the Upaniṣads behind them so also has the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. As Dr. Bhattacharya has shown that some of the parallels between the two works are to be traced to still earlier Buddhistic sources. All these facts suggest that the nucleus of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa was an Upaniṣadic work and at some phase—it might be Gauḍapāda's times—it went under the Buddhistic influence; and then in the final phase of its existence as the V.R. before us, it went under other influences so that the result was a Vedāntic Epic—a text teaching a synthesis. Thus if the relation of the two works is to be defined then the V.R. in its first phase belongs to a pre-Gauḍapāda period, as Mokṣopāya it is perhaps a contemporary text the development taking place in this period, and then as the V.R. it belongs to a considerably later period. The date of the Kārikās would naturally fall within this longer period of the development of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa period. Between the two works, it is not a simple case of borrowing; but the very strong similarity in expression and thought is due to the fact that the two took shape in the same atmosphere. In Kāśmīr where the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa was produced, the influence of Nāgārjuna was at work since early times.

Besides the early Vedānta works, the Prasthāntrayī and the Gauḍapāda-Kārikās, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has contacts with other works as well. Thus the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has the following

parallels with the Vākyapadīya of Bhartṛhari. Dr. Atreya has given these parallels in his work as :

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA.

THE VĀKYAPADĪYA

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| 1. चित्तमेव विचित्रेहं भावाभावविलासिना ।
विवर्ततेऽर्थभावेन जलमूर्मितया यथा ॥ VIa.93.46 | I.1.1 |
| 2. द्यौः क्षमा वायुराकाशं पर्वताः सरितो दिशः ।
अन्तःकरणतत्त्वस्य भागा बहिरिव स्थिताः ॥ V.56.35
द्यौः क्षमा वायुराकाशं पर्वताः सरितो दिशः ।
संकल्पकचित्तं सर्वमेवं स्वप्नवदात्मनः ॥ III.101.35 | III.7.41 |
| 3. बाह्यं न विद्यते किञ्चिद्बोधः स्फुरति बाह्यवत् ।
उदेति बोधहृदयाद्वीजादिव वरद्रुमः ॥ VIb.51.8
बाह्यमाभ्यन्तरं भाति स्वप्नार्थोऽत्र निदर्शनम् ।
यदन्तः स्वप्नसंकल्पपुरं च कचनं चित्तेः ॥ III.44.20
बहिर्न किञ्चिदप्यस्ति खाद्रचब्ध्युर्वीदिगादिकम् ।
एतस्त्वचित्त एवास्ति पत्रपुञ्जमिवाङ्कुरे ॥ V.48.49 | III.6.23 |
| 4. सति द्वित्वे किलैकं स्यात्सत्येकत्वे द्विरूपता ।
कले द्वे अपि चिद्रूपे चिद्रूपत्वात्तदप्यसत् VIa.33.4
एकाभावादभावोऽत्र एकत्वद्वित्वयोर्द्वयोः ॥
एकं विना न द्वितीयं न द्वितीयं विनैकता । VIa.33.5 | III.6.28 |
| 5. न च नास्तीति तद्वक्तुं युज्यते चिद्वपुर्यदा ।
न चैवास्तीति तद्वक्तुं युक्तं शान्तमलं तदा ॥ VIb.53.9 | III.1.21 |
| 6. समस्तशक्तिखचितं ब्रह्म सर्वेश्वरं सदा ।
ययैव शक्त्या स्फुरति प्राप्तां तामेव पश्यति ॥ III.67.2 | III.1.22 |
| 7. अनहं सोऽहमिव तदनाशमिव नाशवत् ।
अकलङ्कं कलङ्कीव निर्वेद्यं वेद्यवाहिवत् VIb.35.10 | III.2.8 |
| 8. संबन्धे दृश्यदृष्टीनां मध्ये द्रष्टुर्हि यद्वपुः ।
द्रष्टृदर्शनदृश्यादिवर्जितं तदिदं परम् ॥ III.121.53
समस्तं कल्पनामात्रमिदमाद्यज्ञजन्मनः ।
शून्यमप्रतिघं शान्तं तेष्वपि स्यात्किमन्यथा ॥ VIb.210.11
न दृश्यमस्ति सद्वपुः न द्रष्टा न च दर्शनम् ।
न शून्यं न जडं नो चिच्छान्तमेवेदमाततम् ॥ III.4.70 | III.3.70 |
| 9. यदिदं किञ्चिदाभोगि जगज्जालं प्रदृश्यते ।
तत्सर्वममलं ब्रह्म भवत्येतद्वचवस्थितम् ॥ VIa.11.16 | I.1.4 |

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA.

THE VĀKYAPADĪYA

10. सस्पन्दे समुदेतीव निःस्पन्दान्तर्गते न च ।

I.1.131

इयं यस्मिन्जगत्क्षमीरलात इव चक्रता ॥ III.9.58

11. स्वप्नादिज्ञानसंशान्तौ यद्रूपं शुद्धमैश्वरम् ।

IV.2.12

न तदस्ति न तन्नास्ति न वागोचरमेव तत् V.1b.31.36

Dr. Atreya's conclusions on a study of these parallels can be stated in his own words :

"Not only in the Vairāgyaśataka—which is according to him is an imitation of the Vairāgya *prakaraṇa* of the V.R. and so has other *ślokas* either identical with or written in imitation of the corresponding *ślokas* of the V.R. — but also in the Vākyapadīya which is the systematic philosophical work of Bhartṛhari, we find much that appears to be borrowed from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. The *śloka* III.4.71 of the Vākyapadīya for example, is almost the same as the *śloka* V.36.35 of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. The main reason to believe that Bhartṛhari is the borrower of the two is that his doctrine of *śabda-brahman* which is the main thesis of his work, is unknown to the author of the V.R. It is a doctrine which could not but have been accepted and mentioned in the V.R., if it were otherwise. The *śloka* in question, moreover, embodies one of the main doctrines of the V.R. which contains countless such *ślokas*, but it occurs as a solitary and rare one in the Vākyapadīya. On these considerations we cannot but think that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is an earlier work than that of Bhartṛhari who is said to have died in 650 A. D. How much earlier, it is very difficult to settle. At any rate the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa must have, on these considerations, existed in the life-time of Bhartṛhari, i.e., at about the commencement of the seventh century."

Dr. Raghavan remarks in this context : "To the parallels between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the Vākyapadīya collected by Dr. Atreya may be added

मारूपमिदमाशान्तं जगद्ब्रह्मैव नस्ततम् ।

अनादिनिघनं सत्यं नोदेति न च शाम्यति ॥ V.1b.54.30

अनादिनिघनं ब्रह्म नित्यमस्त्येतदव्ययम् ।

आदिमध्यान्तता नास्ति नाकाराः परमाम्बरे ॥ V.1b.205.22

which certainly is after the opening verse of the Vākyapadīya. It is natural to conclude that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has borrowed from

Bhartṛhari, but Dr. Atreya is unable to come to this conclusion because of the fact that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa knows nothing of the *śabda-brahman* of Bhartṛhari. If the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa did not countenance *śabda-brahman* it was certainly at liberty to ignore it. Not being a polemical work, it was not interested in working up a refutation of the *śabda-brahman* philosophy. This silence on the *śabda-brahman* hardly proves the priority of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to Bhartṛhari. The word and concept of *sphoṭa* is as old as Patañjali; and why does it not occur in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa even in an analogy or a simile ?”

It is unnecessary to add that the argument of silence on which Dr. Atreya chooses to rely is never regarded as even a sound argument not to say a convincing proof. The very fact that the V.R. has ‘countless’ such *ślokas* is an indication of its later character as it has been already shown. The author of the V.R. has a very peculiar genius and gift of using the older material and taking the clue he goes on to elucidate the point by adding a few more of his own and brings the point of view home by repeating the same idea in his own style. So like the argument of silence, the argument that in the Vākyapadīya there is only one *śloka* while the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has many more does not prove anything. Further the *śloka* in question

द्यौः क्षमा वायुराकाशं पर्वताः सरितो दिशः ।

अन्तःकरणतत्त्वस्य भागा बहिरिव स्थिताः ॥ V.56.35

is a doctrine that was current in the Vedāntic quarters. Even if Bhartṛhari had lifted, nothing is proved thereby for our Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa; as Bhartṛhari could get such material from contemporary thought. The parallel pointed out by Dr. Raghavan in fact can be traced back to the Viṣṇusahasranāma in the Anuśāsana-parvan of the Mahābhārata where the construction *anādinidhano dhātā* is met with. In the V.R. also actually *anādinidhano dhātā* occurs in VIb.213.41b

अनादिनिधनो धाता सर्वं ब्रह्मात्मकं यतः ।

It is interesting to note that in this chapter the *ślokas* preceding immediately 33-41 have the same rhyme as that of the famous *stotra*.

When the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa tells us that other *mokṣopāyātmaka* books have been consulted and that he has created a *Samhitā* containing the *sāra* of the works, it is obvious that between

the two, the Vākyapadīya and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, the latter is later.

Other writers from whom the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa appears to have been profited for a phrase or two are the celebrated Mīmāṃsakas, Kumārila and Maṇḍana. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.21.41 is :

विशुद्धज्ञानदेहाहस्तयेते पद्मजादयः ।

ब्रह्मात्मजगदादीनामंशे संस्थानमङ्गने ॥

It is quite likely that the expression is taken from the opening verse of the Śloka-vārtika. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has used the expression again in VIb.142.25.

Chapters 166-67 of VIb deal with the *khyātis* and in these chapters *śloka* 9 in 166 and 1 in 167 have an identical line

आत्मख्यातिरसत्ख्यातिरख्यातिःख्यातिरन्यथा ।

This is a line which occurs as the opening line of the Vibhramaviveka of Maṇḍana.

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in VIa.128.67-76 gives a summary of the Rāmāyaṇa in the guise of the *Avatāra-prayojana*. In this context the *ślokas* 72, 73 are :

स्त्रीसङ्गिनामथास्वास्थ्यं वानरादेः परावृत्तिम्... । 72

सीताविशुद्धिमन्विच्छल्लोकानुमतिमात्मनः ।

जीवन्मुक्तो निःस्पृहोऽपि क्रियाकाण्डपरायणः ॥ 73

...भविष्यति गतिं ब्रह्मं ज्ञानकर्मसमुच्चयौ ॥ 74

These lines remind one of the Bhāgavata-purāṇa IX.10.11. The date of the Bhāgavata-purāṇa is by no means certain, hence it would be difficult to say as to which is using the other; but since the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa constantly refers to the Purāṇas and also to the stories from the Purāṇas, it is likely that the author had gone through that Purāṇa also. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VIa.122.11 is

तनुं त्यजतु वा तीर्थे श्रपचस्य गृहेऽपि वा ।

मा कदाचन वा राजन्वर्तमानेऽपि वा क्षणे ॥

This is clearly an echo of *śloka* 81 of the Paramārthasāra. A similar *anuṣṭubha* is seen in the Dattātreyagītā I.69. The context here in the

Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is the Ikṣvāku-prabodhana which has already been shown is an episode worked up. So it is quite likely that a verse seen elsewhere should have been called up in service.

What is the relation between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the great Śaṁkarācārya? The answer is not easy and the problem is extremely complicated. The works of Śaṁkara are no doubt many; but there is no unanimity amongst scholars as to how many of these could be regarded as coming from the pen of the master. The problem has been touched upon by Dr. Atreya and his views are given below :

"Is there any reason why we should positively believe the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to be a post-Śaṁkara work, and is there any difficulty in placing it before Śaṁkara? There did exist a school of thinkers in Vedānta even before the Kārikās of Gauḍapāda and so the fact that the term Vedāntin or Vedāntavādin occurs in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is not a decisive factor to prove that it must have been a post-Śaṁkara work. In the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa we do not find any other indication against its priority to Śaṁkara. There are on the other hand some grounds in its favour :

1. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is no doubt a work on Advaita philosophy and its general standpoint is very much similar to that of the school of Śaṁkara, with some differences here and there. Yet it is very curious and conspicuous that the peculiar terminology of Śaṁkara is quite unknown to the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. This could not have been so, had the author been a writer posterior to Śaṁkara. The author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa seems to be totally ignorant of Śaṁkara, his philosophy and school. Some of the terms and conceptions of Śaṁkara and his immediate followers, which are conspicuous by their absence in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa are noted here : (a) *Adhyāsa*; (b) *Sādhana catuṣṭaya* consisting of *viveka*, *virāga*, *śat-sampat-śama*, *dama*, *uparati*, *titikṣā*, *śraddhā* and *saṁādāna* and *mumukṣatva*; (c) *Saguṇa* and *Nirguṇa* Brahman; (d) *Apara* Brahman; (e) *Saviśeṣa* and *Nirviśeṣa* Brahman; (f) *Īśvara* as distinguished from Brahman; (g) *Upādhi*; (h) *Prārabdha karma*; (i) *Samcita karma*; (j) *Karmamukti*; (k) *Bādhā*; (l) *Pañcakośas*; (m) the stereotyped conception of *māyā* and *avidyā* as the *upādhi* of *Īśvara*; (n) Beginninglessness of *avidyā* and *karma*; (o) the evolutionary process of the world as different from that of the Sāṁkhya (Śaṁkara's view

of cosmology is quite unknown to Vasiṣṭha); (p) the peculiar way of interpreting the Mahā-vākyas of the Upaniṣads adopted by the school of Śaṅkara, etc.

2. In the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa the Advaitavāda is not found to be a finished and conceptualised system as in Śaṅkara but it is presented therein in a cloud-like vague and uncertain form and without any fixity of meaning in the terms used.

3. The author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa does neither try to defend his own position by arguments or Upaniṣadic texts nor by criticising others; but quite opposite was the tendency of the times of Śaṅkarācārya, and specially of his own school.

4. From the time of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara the Śruti has been considered as the supreme and unquestionable source of the Advaita Vedānta or Advaita philosophy; but we do not find this tenet in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. For Vasiṣṭha, Experience is the Ultimate *pramāṇa* of knowledge (II.19.16; VIb.197.15).

5. A careful and comparative study of the poetical works of Śaṅkarācārya, particularly the Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, Śaṅkara's authorship of which is generally accepted by scholars like Abhyankar and Radhakrishnan—will show clearly that Śaṅkara was not only influenced by the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa but also had thoroughly imbibed its teachings and in many places composed almost literally identical verses. Thus¹

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA	THE VIVEKACŪḌĀMAṆI
Vib.197.18; V.67.2	6
II.14.52; V.13.8	11
Vib.174.24; II.14.53	13
V.43.13	56
V.43.17	53
Vib.162.18; V.43.19	57
Vib.174.24; III.6.2	58
Vib.197.18	63
III.8.15; VIa.118.4	64
III.7.28	65
III.6.9	68

1. For text see : The Philosophy of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha, pp. 660-677.

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

THE VIVEKACŪḌAMAṆI

III.9.25	72
I.18.38	89
VIa.51.50	98
IV.1.7	125
III.7.18	126
VIa.9.32	131
V.91.8	147
III.116.8; IV.47.48; V.50.14	171
III.57.50; IV.47.48; III.62.54	172
VIb.210.11; IV.11.23	173
III.100.9	174
VIb.139.1	179
III.116.18	182
VIb.190.25	185
III.116.8, 91.49; V.21.26, 24.15	183
III.100.35	198
III.42.1, 21.59	199
III.67.68; V.79.3	204
III.3.40	234
III.61.4	237
III.121.53; 84.26	241
IV.4.41	254
III.21.66	255
II.2.5	268
IV.27.18; VIa.10.8	273
V.24.22, 43; III.61.35	276-277
III.98.2	278
VIa.41.5-6	279
VIa.128.25	289
III.11.4	294
IV.33.35; VIb.15.2; 7.11	299
VIa.116.3; VIb.26.29	301
IV.33.28; V.13.17	302, 305
VIa.94.13; VIb.57.3	308
V.24.27	311
VIb.159.41; 184.46	317
III.22.8	318

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

III.1.36; 21.76

IV.54.19

III.7.17

V.67.30

IV.33.50; 22.25

III.56.28; 88.21; VIa.210.7

III.21.76, 78

VIa.29.7, 8

III.100.30; V.27.3

V.72.2; VIa.60.21

VIa.49.28; III.9.3

III.11.25; V.21.26; VIa.2.41

III.98.2; IV.17.19

III.119.17; IV.1.7; VIa.2.36; VIb.49.18

III.9.11

III.9.4

V.16.19; 6.10

V.16.21, 77.11

III.9.8

VIa.2.43, 47

V.64.53

V.35.81; VIb.46.8

IV.45.42, 43

VIa.126.68, 69

IV.22.31, 33

III.96.43

III.57.44

VIb.53.9

III.100.39

THE VIVEKACŪDĀMAṆI.

321, 329

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359, 360

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389, 390

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THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

VIa.49.17; 9.17

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

V.71.39

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

III.44.19, 55.61; V.59.35

III.114.56; VIa.22.27

THE SVĀTMANIRŪPAṆA

97

THE SVĀTMABODHA

17

THE ŚATAŚLOKI

81

81

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

THE ŚATAŚLOKI

IV.45.7; VIa.28.34	6
VIa.108.20	15
VIb.210.11	36
VIa.33.4, 5; III.10.14	10

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

THE DAKṢIṆĀMŪRTISTOTRA

III.44.20; VIb.22.27	1
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THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

THE APAROKṢĀNUBHŪTI

V.5.6	11
V.58.32	12
III.7.29	60
III.7.42,43	61
III.7.44	62
III.3.30	62
III.66.7	62
II.17.9	70
III.21.65	72
IV.1.7	73
III.62.4	79
IV.11.29, 17.4; VIa.28.37	140

It cannot be maintained that of the two, the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is the borrower; for the technical terms of Śaṅkara, found in his works from which the extracts are taken, are not found in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa."

Swami Bhumananda in his paper 'Priority of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha to Śaṅkarācārya' agrees with Dr. Atreya in thinking that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is the earlier and has influenced the great ācārya. His arguments are as under :

1. Śloka 4 in Chapter XIII of the Bhagavadgītā reads as : *Ṛṣibhirbahudhā gītām* etc. and in his *bhāṣya* on the verse Śaṅkara explains the word as : *ṛṣibhiḥ vasiṣṭhādibhis*. The reference is undoubtedly to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as there is no other philosophical work with the name of Vasiṣṭha attached to it. The only other work, religious book associated with Vasiṣṭha, in existence is the Vāsiṣṭha Saṁhitā, probably compiled after the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, by a different author and it does not contain any description of Brahman to

which Śaṁkara refers in his *bhāṣya* on the *Gītā śloka*. In case the authors of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the Vāsiṣṭha Saṁhitā are one and the same then the argument is strengthened all the more; for in the Śārīrakabhāṣya on the Vedānta Sūtras III.4.50, Śaṁkara has quoted two stanzas from the Vāsiṣṭha Saṁhitā of these one is VI.40 and the other is untraced in the Saṁhitā but Śaṁkara indicates that the source is the same.

2. In his *bhāṣya* on the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad I.8, Śaṁkara has quoted from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa prefacing the quotations as—*tathā ca vāsiṣṭhe yogaśāstre*. There can be no doubt that this Yoga-śāstra of Vāsiṣṭha is no other than the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. There is a certain section of Sanskrit scholars which is doubtful of the genuineness of the *bhāṣya* of Śaṁkara on the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad but their arguments are not convincing.

3. In his *bhāṣya* on the Sanatsujātīya I.15 and 31, Śaṁkara has quoted two *ślokas* from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa : *tathā ca āha bhagavān vasiṣṭhaḥ* and *tathā ca āha vasiṣṭhaḥ*. This *bhāṣya* on the Sanatsujātīya cannot be ignored, as it can be proved to the hilt that Śaṁkara did write a *bhāṣya* on it for : (A) Mādhavācārya in his Śaṁkaradigvijaya makes a clear statement of the Sanatsujātīyabhāṣya having been written by Śaṁkarācārya

ततो महाभारतसारभूतः स व्याकरोत् भागवतीश्च गीताः ।

सनत्सुजातीयमसत्सुद्वरं ततो नृसिंहस्य च तापनीयम् ॥

(B) In the *bhāṣya* on the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad I. 4, Śaṁkara says : *Sanatsujātepi ekapadaṁ notkṣipati*, etc. This shows that Śaṁkara had every regard for the Sanatsujātīya. It is not therefore improbable that he wrote a *bhāṣya* on it. (C) In his Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, Śaṁkara refers to the Sanatsujātīya

प्रमादो ब्रह्मनिष्ठायां न कर्तव्यः कदाचन ।

प्रमादो मृत्युरित्याह भगवान् ब्रह्मणः सुतः ॥

Here *brahmaṇaḥ sutaḥ* refers to Sanatkumāra and Śaṁkara practically makes a quotation here from the Sanatsujātīya I.4.

All these facts combined with the evidence marshalled by Dr. Atreya are direct proofs which clearly prove the priority of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to Śaṁkarācārya.

Dr. Raghavan's views regarding the relation between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and Śaṅkara are as given under :

1. He agrees that there are many parallels between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, Dakṣiṇāmūrti Stotra, Svātmanirūpaṇa, Svātmabodha, Śātaśloki and Aparokṣānubhūti. He has to add a few more to the list of Dr. Atreya. Dr. Atreya thinks that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VIb.22.27 and III.44.20 are parallels to the Dakṣiṇāmūrti Stotra 1 as in both the places the world is compared to a city seen in a mirror but Dr. Raghavan thinks that III.80.40, the minister's reply to the Rākṣasi, is a better parallel :

महानगरनिर्माणं मुकुटेऽन्तरिवामले ।

2. The simile of a tree latent in the seed in the DS.

बीजस्यान्तरिवांकुरो जगदिवम्

is frequently used by the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in III.81.83, 85; VIb.18.5.

3. The Nirguṇamānasapūjā also called Parāpūjā is one of the minor works ascribed to Śaṅkara. The theme of this piece appears in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VIa.38.25 :

एतदेव परं ध्यानं पूजैवैव परा स्मृता । VIa.38.25.

As if reminding us that he was having in mind Śaṅkara's minor work, Parāpūjā, the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa uses here the words *parāpūjā* themselves.

4. Dr. Atreya argues that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa attitude is quite distinct from that of Bhartṛhari who believes in Āgama and from that of Śaṅkara who believes in the Vedānta as the Ultimate *pramāṇas*, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa laying emphasis on *anubhava*. Indeed, Bhartṛhari also regards *anubhūti* as the only *māna* as can be seen from his Svānubhūtyekamānāya. The Vakyapadīya, however, being a treatise on grammar (Vyākaraṇa), it is but natural that he glorifies Āgama or Śāstra. Similarly, Śaṅkara also states that *anubhūti* is the final proof in a passage in his *bhāṣya* on the Brahma-sūtra I.1.2 :

“न धर्मजिज्ञासायामिव श्रुत्यादयः” भूतवस्तुविषयत्वाच्च
ब्रह्मजिज्ञासायाः ।”

5. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.21.35 in Sarasvatī's teaching to Līlā is taken in entirety from Śaṅkara's minor work Brahmānu-

cintana.¹ From this it would appear that Śaṅkara emphasises *anubhava* and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa also accepts the Vedāntas. For in II.13.11 the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa recommends an effort to verify and find the same Truth in the Śāstra, in the preceptor's word and in one's own *anubhava*. Moreover in VIa.98.22, 23 is given a list of the *pramāṇas* as the *śāstras*, *anubhava*, *vedas* and *loka*.

6. A good deal is common between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the Sarvavedāntasiddhāntasārasaṁgraha (SVSSS.) ascribed to Ācārya Śaṅkara.

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

III.9.4, 9, 13

III.9.14

III.118.5-6, 8-15

V.7.16, 18-19, 21

THE SVSSS.

p.253.14

p.254.979

939.948

980-982, p.254

It is to be borne in mind that the SVSSS may not be a work of Śaṅkara.²

7. Another parallel from a minor work of Śaṅkara, the Laghu-vākyaavṛtti, ascribed to Śaṅkara is *śloka* 17 : *tat cintanam tat kathanam* etc., describing *adhyāsa*, is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.22.24.

8. To come to the parallels from Śaṅkara's Sūtrabhāṣya one can refer to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa V.71.19, 31 and the opening sentences of the *bhāṣya* of Śaṅkara :

छायातपप्रसरयोः प्रकाशतमसोर्यथा ।

न सम्भवति संबन्धस्तथा वै देहदेहिनोः ॥ V.71.19

यथा तेजस्तिमिरयोर्न संबन्धो न तुल्यता ।

अत्यन्तभिन्नयो राम तथैवात्मशरीरयोः ॥ V.71.31.

In fact the whole context from 18-32 reminds one strongly of the opening passage of the Sūtrabhāṣya. This may also remind us of the illustration of *chāyātapa* used in this context by Padmapāda in his *Pañcapādikā*.

9. Yet another passage in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa where there is unmistakable reference to the opening expression of the Śaṅkara-

1. Vani Vilas edition, Vol. XVI, p. 84.

2. Vani Vilas edition, Vol. XV.

bhāṣya on the BS. is II.17.16-17 which has the famous *sāsmadyuṣmat-savistaram*.

10. Dr. Atreya's contention that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is the earlier work than Śaṅkara because some of Śaṅkara's concepts are not to be found in it, has no force in it as it is not a statement of facts. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa advocates an uncompromising type of Advaita and holds the *dṛṣṭisrṣṭi* view and this necessitates its own method of treatment in which stress cannot be laid on two or three kinds of *sattā* etc. The concept of *abhyāsa* is older than Śaṅkara as it has been used by the Buddhists as Stcherbatsky has shown in his 'Buddhistic Logic' (II, p.409) and so the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa if it wanted to refer to it, might have done so on the basis of other sources. Certainly the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa does not belittle the *sādhana*s though it does not adopt the phrase *sādhanacatuṣṭaya*. When the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa assigns two chapters to *vairāgya* and *mumukṣutva*, what does it emphasise except Śaṅkara's *ihāmutraphalabhogavirāga* and *mumukṣutva*? *Śama*, *saṁtoṣa* etc. are all dealt within the Mumukṣuvyavahāraprakaraṇa. Here the argument of Dr. Atreya is similar to the one he uses to prove the priority of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to Bhartṛhari.

Dr. Dasgupta observes : "There is another fact which deserves consideration in this connection. In spite of the fact that the views of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and Śaṅkara's interpretation of Vedānta have important points of agreement, neither of them refers to the other. I am, therefore, inclined to think that the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa was probably a contemporary of Gauḍapāda or Śaṅkara, or a century anterior to them."

This is a problem of utmost importance from the point of view of the history of the Vedānta doctrine and also from the point of view of determining the position of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in the Vedānta literature. Before starting to discuss the arguments of the scholars mentioned above, it is very easy to discard the idea of the two being contemporary or even coming one after another very closely as Dr. Dasgupta suggests, for the fact that there are a number of parallels as pointed out by Drs. Atreya and Raghavan goes against the contemporaneous character of the two. It is obvious that one must be earlier. Secondly, for the lifting to be possible, the time

allowed must be sufficient for the source to get currency and authority.

Swami Bhumananda's arguments really do not prove anything for the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as we have it now with us. The references that he has collected from the works ascribed to Śaṅkara are valuable only to prove the existence of some philosophical work by Vasiṣṭha. These references do not refer to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as we have it now, and which on other clear counts belongs to a pretty late date. Therefore any reference to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, which Dr. Atreya has before him is simply impossible. Secondly, the evidence that Swamiji has brought forward is mostly from uncertain quarters so far as the present problem is concerned. For the authorship of Śaṅkara of works to which he refers is not unquestioned and the references to the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa are not beyond doubt. In such a controversy evidence of a doubtful character as far as possible is to be avoided. Thirdly, Swamiji's arguments presuppose an identity of Vasiṣṭha, the teacher of Śaṅkara Vedānta school, Vasiṣṭha, the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Saṁhitā and Vasiṣṭha, the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Unless this identity is proved, the arguments will continue to lack in force. But as said already, these references are useful only to show that the Vedāntic tradition knew of a work of Vasiṣṭha on philosophy. The later character of the Vāsiṣṭha Saṁhitā is quite evident from a number of other grounds more convincing and if in spite of these forces, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa were to belong to a pre-Śaṅkara period and were to be the source of inspiration to the great *ācārya*, then Swamiji's arguments will have to be strengthened by further evidence of a very convincing character.

Dr. Atreya's arguments seem to arise from a position already taken regarding the antiquity of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. His arguments being themselves very weak in force do not lead us anywhere. Thus the argument that certain technical terms current in Śaṅkara and his school are not found in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, is his usual argument of silence, which generally is not accepted as an argument capable of proving anything. As Dr. Raghavan has pointed out, certain terms and principles are accepted by the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. *Adhyāsa* goes back to Buddhistic days. The two types of Brahman, *saṁguṇa* and *nirguṇa* do not appear, for they have no place in the scheme of

things of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Similarly, the graded order of realities also is not necessary. The *māyā* doctrine of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa though it has similarities has its fundamental differences which cannot be ignored. This is exactly what is being done when all Śaṅkarite terms and concepts are expected to occur in a text of a post-Śaṅkara period. The tendency of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has been shown to be, in all the preceding pages, to lift only what is necessary. Similarly, what can be proved by pointing out that Gandharvanagara, Vandhyāputra etc. occur in the two? In fact, this is the material which both have taken up from Buddhistic quarters. Dr. Atreya goes on suspecting lifting even where it is not necessary or when it can be explained by a very plausible possibility, likely to be more in conformity with the facts. Thus, much that he has pointed out is to be traced to the common Buddhistic fund on which the two have drawn. What has been stated in the case of Gauḍapāda is true in the case of Śaṅkara also. If the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa had a nucleus which stretches back to the period of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara, no lifting need be suspected so far as the Buddhistic element in these is concerned. In an age when Buddhistic logic dominated the intellectual thought of the times, it is no wonder if Brahmanical thinkers tried to bring to their own philosophy, the added glamour. But all this does not prove anything for our Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

Apart from the Buddhistic material there are other parallels shown by Dr. Atreya which are also to be subjected to the remarks above and these, if anything, prove that it is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which has lifted. Thus

मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव । IV.22.31

यन्नाम किञ्चित्त्रैलोक्यं स एवावयवो मम ।

तरंगोऽब्धाविवेत्यन्तर्यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ IV.22.33

in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is parallel to Śaṅkara's

मय्यखण्डसुखाम्बोधी बहुधा विश्ववीचयः ।

उत्पद्यन्ते विलीयन्ते मायामाहृतविभ्रमात् ॥ VCM. 497

Who is using whom? Śaṅkara the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa or the reverse? The clue is simple. It is evident that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has the Bhagvadgītā before it. Of the three lines here the first is

identical, the third has last half identical and the second is an echo of *vistabhyāhamidaṁ kṛstnaṁ ekāṁśena sthito jagat* (BG. X.42). Thus the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to express an idea has gone to some other source; and now only the first half of the third line remains to be traced and this is from the Vivekacūḍāmaṇi. Śaṁkara is writing in his natural manner as his fluent imagery and happy phrase in *māyā-mārutavibhrama* suggests. In any case he is not tapping other source for the construction of a couplet. Thus the possibility is that it is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which has lifted.

Here is another case. The Śataśloki 6, is said to correspond to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VI.45.7; IVa.28.34, 35

कश्चित् कीटः कथंचित्पटुमतिरभितः कण्टकानां कुटीरं
कुर्वन्तेनैव साकं व्यवहृतिविधये चेष्टते यावदायुः ।
तद्वज्जीवोऽपि नानाचरितसमुदितैः कर्मभिः स्थूलदेहं
निर्मयात्रैव तिष्ठन्ननुदिनममुना साकमभ्येति भूयः ॥ Śataśloki 6

and

मनसेदं शरीरं हि वासनार्थं प्रकल्पितम् ।
कृमिकोशप्रकारेण स्वात्मकोश इव स्वयम् ॥ IV.45.7
प्राक्प्रवाहचिराभ्यस्तो वासनातिशयेन यः । VIa.28.34
तथैव दृश्यते देहस्तथाऽऽकृत्युदयेन सः । VIa.28.35.

Now which presupposes the other ? Śaṁkara in his inimitable style describes with force, the life of the *kīṭa* which is to correspond the *jīva* in the third line. Taken by itself, Śaṁkara's verse is complete, explains itself and is without any theoretical terminology. Not a single word needs any explanation. Now we turn to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa verse and these are found to contain the words *vāsanā* and *svātmakośa*. But the real problem is the *kṛmikośaparakāra*. What is this *prakāra* ? These verses themselves do not explain it and for the explanation one has to turn to the verse by Śaṁkara. *Prakāra* cannot be understood by the reader or the student unless the teacher explains to him the mode. Is it anything but fair and natural to presume that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa presupposes the Śataśloki where this *prakāra* is clearly described ? The only other possibility is that the *kṛmikośaparakāra* was a usual Vedānta stock *dṛṣṭānta*. Thus, if the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the Śataśloki are related, then it is the former which

presupposes the latter or else they are independent. But this fact does not support Dr. Atreya.

Take yet another case. Correspondence is shown between the Svātmanirūpaṇa 97

व्यवहारदर्शयेयं विद्याविद्येति वेदपरिभाषा ।

नास्त्येव तत्त्वदृष्ट्या तत्त्वं ब्रह्मैव नान्यदस्त्यस्मात् ॥

and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VIa.49.17; VIa.9.17

अविद्येयमयं जीव इत्याविकलनाक्रमः ।

अप्रबुद्धप्रबोधाय कल्पितो वाग्विदां वरैः ॥ VIa.49.17

शास्त्रसंव्यवहारार्थं न राम परमार्थतः ।

नाविद्यास्ति न विद्यास्ति कृतं कल्पनयानया ॥ VIa.9.17

Now here which is likely to be the original ? In fact, there should be no doubt in this matter. What is the significance of *vāgvidām varaiḥ kalpitah* in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa? Whom does it refer? Does this indicate that the idea is originally its own or that it is referring to a theory already conceived by others? On the other hand is there anything in Śaṅkara that suggests his referring to the views of some others? It is to be remembered that the doctrine of relative truth or graded reality is associated with Śaṅkara and he has given hints of all his theories in his comments on the Bādarāyaṇa Sūtras. In this very context one may be referred to his

सर्वव्यवहाराणामेव प्राग्ब्रह्मात्मताविज्ञानात् सत्यत्वोपपत्तेः ।

स्वप्नव्यवहारस्येव प्राक्प्रबोधात् । ... तस्मात् प्राग्ब्रह्मात्मताप्रतिबोधात्

उपपन्नः सर्वो लौकिको वेदिकश्च व्यवहारः । Śaṅkara's comm. on BS. II.1.14.

With this background is it not clear that Śaṅkara is here stating his favourite doctrine while it is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa that implies Śaṅkara's doctrine ?

In a similar manner it can be shown that all the cases prove that it is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which is using Śaṅkara. It is needless to comment on each and every instance shown by Dr. Atreya. At times the similarities go back to the Bhagavadgītā or Bhartṛhari. But in no case can it be argued in any convincing manner that it is Śaṅkara who is using some other source.

Drs. Atreya and Raghavan have pointed out a good many parallels yet here a few more are given.

Thus the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VIb.99.47 is

भवेद्भ्रमात्मकमपि किञ्चिदर्थक्रियाकरम् ।

स्वप्नाङ्गनापि कुरुते सत्यामर्थक्रियां नृणाम् ॥ VIb.99.47

the second line here is repeated at III.26.48 as

स्वप्नाङ्गना च कुरुते शून्याप्यर्थक्रियां नृणाम् । III.26.48.

Śaṅkara discusses a similar topic, *bhramātmaka* being *arthakriyākara* or *asatya* producing *satya* and his remarks are

तथा च श्रुतिः

यदा कर्मसु काम्येषु स्त्रियं स्वप्नेषु पश्यति ।

समृद्धिं तत्र जानीयात् तस्मिन्स्वप्ननिदर्शने ॥ (Chan. Up. 5.2.9)

इत्यसत्येन स्वप्नदर्शनेन सत्यायाः समृद्धेः प्राप्तिं

दर्शयति । Śaṅkara's comm. on BS. II.1.14

It is to be noted that the commentator explains the *arthakriyākaratva* as *pādaśaṁvāhanādi arthakriyām* which cannot be accepted. Another point is that immediately after this instance of a woman, Śaṅkara refers to another *śruti* which describes the sight of a man *puruṣaṁ kṛṣṇadantam*, etc. as indicating something inauspicious. Śaṅkara who is obviously arguing the point first has to marshal the supporting *śruti* texts first and then add the reference to the popular notion and again bring the point home by adding yet another instance of the *rekhā*. On the other hand the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which presupposes all this only refers to one of the instances and passes on.

Again the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.96.71 is

ऊर्णनाभाद्यथा तन्तुर्जायते चेतनाज्जडः ।

नित्यप्रबुद्धात्पुरुषाद्ब्रह्मणः प्रकृतिस्तथा ॥ III.96.71

The *Ūrṇanābha dr̥ṣṭānta* appears in Śaṅkara also in the passage—*tan-tunābhaśca svata eva tantūn sr̥jati*—Śaṅkara's comm. on BS.II.1.25. It is to be noticed, however, that the *dr̥ṣṭānta* can be traced back to the *Śvetāśvatara*. While Śaṅkara illustrates with the *dr̥ṣṭānta* the unnecessary character of *bāhya sādhanas* in certain cases, in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa the *dr̥ṣṭānta* illustrates *vaicitrya*.

Further, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa III.96.43 is

यथा गच्छति शैलूषो रूपाण्यलं तथैव हि ।

मनो नामान्यनेकानि धत्ते कर्मान्तरं व्रजत् ॥ III.96.43

As Dr. Atreya has pointed out the idea appears in the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* 556. But the *dr̥ṣṭānta* of a *naṭa* appears in the *bhāṣya* of Śaṅkara on BS. II.1.18. The passage is

तथा मूलकारणमेव अन्त्यात् कार्यात् तेन तेन घर्मकारणेन
नटवत् सर्वव्यवहारास्पदत्वं प्रतिपद्यते । II.1.18.

According to the author of the *Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa* *manas* is the *mūla-kāraṇa* and so it is clear that he has the passage from Śaṅkara before him.

The *Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa* III.2 narrates in its own style the story of Ākāśaja Vipra. But the idea is found in a germinal form in a *dr̥ṣṭānta* given by Śaṅkara in his *bhāṣya* on BS. II.1.18.

अभावस्य विषयत्वानुपपत्तेः आकाशहननप्रयोजनखड्गाद्यनेकायुधप्रयुक्तिवत् । II.1.18.

In philosophical argument the *dr̥ṣṭānta* comes first and then comes the full-fledged allegory. Even about the *mokṣa* and the *jīva* the *Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa* has a similar allegory. The allegory does nothing but with the analogy of a King and a country illustrates whatever has been said about *mokṣa* by writers like Gaudapāda and Śaṅkara.

The *Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa* V.9.36 is

अज्ञानैकहतो बाल्ये यौवने मदनाहतः ।

शेषे कलत्रचिन्तार्तः किं करोति कदा जडः ॥ V.9.36

and this is evidently after Śaṅkara's famous

बालस्तावत्कीडासक्तस्तरुणस्तावत्तृणोरक्तः ।

वृद्धस्तावच्चिन्तामग्नः परे ब्रह्मणि कोऽपि न लग्नः ॥

in his *Mohamudgara* 7. Again may be noted V.20.7 and MM. 23.

All these similarities taken together with those pointed out by others will prove that the author of the *Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa* did know Śaṅkara and the *Śaṅkara-bhāṣya* also, a work, the authorship of which is not in doubt and where the great *ācārya* has thrown the hints of his philosophy on which the whole structure of Vedānta stands, i.e. where at least he could not be suspected of lifting. The reference to *parāpūjā* is similarly corroborative. The ideas like the *bijasyāntarivāmkuro*, etc. do not prove anything in favour of the *Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa*; for as Dr. K. C. Pandey has shown these ideas could be traced to Śaṅkara's knowledge of the Kāśmīra Pratyabhijñā philo-

sophy (pp. 89-90). Śaṅkara's knowledge of the Tantras can be seen from the epithet *sarva-tantra-svatantra* in his *birudāvali*. As Prof. Sivaprasada Bhattacharya has shown the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is also under the influence of the Kāśmīra philosophy. Thus, the very puzzling and close similarity between Śaṅkara and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is due to several factors. They both have a Buddhistic background, essentially Upaniṣadic essence and a tinge of the Kāśmīra philosophy too. But all this cannot come in the way of the fact that the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa came after Śaṅkara with as many centuries between them as to allow him the use of his minor works. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa simply cannot belong to a pre-Śaṅkara period. Even if the identity implied in Swami Bhumananda's argument is by chance proved—and one does consider it an impossibility—the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa cannot go back to a pre-Śaṅkara age.

Sarvajñātman wrote his Śaṅkṣepa-Śārīraka in c. 900 A.D. Mr. P. C. Divanji in the introduction to his edition of the Siddhānta-leśasaṁgraha argues in detail that the Śaṅkṣepa-Śārīraka presupposes the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. In his paper to the VII All-India Oriental Conference he suggests that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is earlier than the c. 900 A.D. using this very argument. His main argument is that the Śaṅkṣepa-Śārīraka has a reference to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

संकल्पपूर्वकममूढघुनन्दनस्य नाहं विज्ञान इति कंचन कालमेतत् ।

ब्रह्मोपदेशमुपलभ्य निमित्तमात्रं तद्योत्सर्ज स कृते सति देवकार्ये ॥ II.182

refers to the instruction to Rāma and so this is a clear reference to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

Dr. Raghavan observes in this connection : 'This is a mistake. Śaṅkṣepa-Śārīraka II.182 on which Mr. Divanji so much relies does not refer to the story forming the basis of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, but it refers to an incident described by Vālmīki towards the end of the Yuddha-kāṇḍa of his Rāmāyaṇa. After the killing of Rāvaṇa, the gods extol Rāma as God, but Rāma affirms that he is a mortal, the son of Daśaratha : *ātmānaṁ mānuṣaṁ manye rāmaṁ daśarathātmajam.*' But Brahman now sings a eulogy of Rāma reminding him of his divinity, on hearing which Rāma nods assent. This is the *Brahmo-padeśa* referred to by Sarvajñātman. Or Sarvajñātman might be referring here to the still later context of Rāma sorrowing at the

disappearance of Sītā into the womb of Earth and Brahman again reminding him of his divinity and the impropriety of the sorrow (Uttara-kāṇḍa 98.11ff).

It is obvious that Dr. Raghavan's suggestions are no doubt ingenious and deserve consideration. The difficulty in accepting these suggestions is that on these occasions there is no philosophy taught to Rāma by Brahmā. These are of the nature of ordinary consolations and nothing more. While the reference by Sarvajñātman suggests that the *upadeśa* that he is referring to, is primarily philosophical in character. On the other hand it is clear that the reference cannot be to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as it is today; for the indications about its being later than c. 900 A.D. are of a very decisive character. The only other alternative is that the author, Sarvajñātman is having a text before him in which Rāma was given some philosophical instruction and it is not unlikely that this very text, later on was developed in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

It was stated above that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa takes up *dr̥ṣṭāntas*, and either by allegories or by recasting older stories into interesting philosophical narratives gives them a local habitation and colouring. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa narrates the story of Gādhī who has the *bhrama* of being a *cāṇḍāla* etc. (V.44-49). The same idea occurs in a rather different manner in Rāmānuja I.i.i.

अविद्याने हि पुरुषमात्राकारे प्रतीक्षमाने तदतिरेकिणि
पारमार्थिके राजत्वे तिरोहिते सत्येव व्याघ्रत्वभ्रमः ।
राजत्वोपदेशेन च तन्निवृत्तिर्भवति नाविद्यानामात्रोपदेशेन ।

Similarly the idea of two moons as wrong knowledge, now and then appears in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as in III.66.7

यथा द्वित्वं शशाङ्कादौ पश्यत्यक्षि मलाविलम् ।

This idea Dr. Atreya compares with the Aparokṣānubhūti 62

यथा आकाशे द्विचन्द्रत्वम् ।

This idea occurs in Rāmānuja more frequently yet the same can be traced to the Śaṅkara's *bhāṣya* on BS. II.1.27

नहि तिमिरोपहतनयनेनानेक इव चन्द्रमा दृश्यमानः अनेक एव भवति ।

Dr. Atreya tries to point out some parallels between the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and the Mānasollāsa of Someśvara

THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA	THE MĀNASOLLĀSA
III.64.7; V.48.49; VIb.51.8	I.8
VIb.56.3	I.9
VIa.176.5	I.11
VIb.49.18	I.12
IV.47.41	I.18
VIb.210.11	I.28
III.5.6	II.19
III.1.20	II.31
VIa.37.16; IV.44.14	II.48
IV.45.45	IV.3
IV.1.36; VIa.107.13	VIII.5, 6
IV.47.41	VIII.9
VIa.95.9	VIII.13
III.43.3	VIII.12
IV.27.28	VIII.24
V.50.34	VIII.26
III.21.76, 78	IX.30
VIa.69.27, 40, 29; V.91.40	IX.31

This is the list of Dr. Atreya after a comparison of the two works. One must confess one's inability to find a very significant similarity in these passages. Further, even granting there is such a similarity, for the sake of argument, there is nothing in these passages that proves anything in favour of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. In fact all the idealistic conceptions that are to be met with in Someśvara are to be explained by the fact that he was a disciple of the great Śaṅkara. No other presumption for explaining these elements in him is necessary. If at all there has been any influencing then it is likely that it is the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa who must have profited himself by a reading of the works of Someśvara.

All this discussion must have shown as to how the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is closely related to the Brahmanical literature in general and to Vedānta philosophy in particular. The core of the work, thus, is essentially Brahmanical. Yet there are in it different strands also. The Buddhistic influence on the work is too obvious to escape notice. It is very difficult to compare the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa with the Buddhist philosophical literature as it has been studied here in rela-

tion to the Brahmanical philosophy, still an effort can be made to collect some important facts about the same which indicate that influence.

Prof. Sivaprasada Bhattacharya in his paper submitted to the Third Oriental Conference observes : "The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is Buddhistic in essence and inception and differs from other Rāma philosophical literature, as here the story has no importance at all and we have nothing but philosophising in a fashion and to an end. The philosophy which Vasiṣṭha teaches here is not fathered by the orthodox tradition on him or on any other Indian sage of legendary or Purāṇic fame.

Again terms like *vandhyāputra*, *ākāśakusuma*, *gandharvanagara* which are common-places in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa are the stock-in-trade of a certain school of philosophers and these terms are of a frequent occurrence in literature professedly Buddhistic.

Thirdly, the setting itself is Buddhistic; for Rāma like Buddha is mortified at the many kinds of *duḥkha*, *jāti*, *jarā*, *vyādhi* etc. and wants to find out the way to salvation which leads to the discussion about *vairāgya*, *mumukṣutva*, *utpatti*, *sthitī*, *upaśama* and *nirvāṇa*. It is curious to note that the Daśaratha Jātaka (Vol. IV, Fausboll) does exactly hint at a similar situation—predicament—which is removed afterwards as is evidenced by the *gāthās* cited.

Fourthly, the author's especial fondness for words like *mālita*, *buddha*, derivatives of the root 'cup' to silence, words and phrases of philosophical import like, *bhāva*, *śūnya*, *cit*, *ātman*, *karman*, *nirvāṇa*, *ṛṣṇā*, *bhogapañcaka*, *nairātmya*, *brahman*, *vijñāna*, and *ākāśa* betrays his leaning for Buddhistic tenets and doctrines.

Fifthly, in quite a number of passages, Vairāgya 26.32, Mumukṣu 18.25, 26, 27, Utpatti 6.13; 26.44, Nirvāṇa 7.33; 44.10, the words *Buddha*, *Saṁsāra* and *Asaṁga* with compounds therefrom are used in such a manner as if they are used as proper names. Asaṁga is one of the earliest teachers of the Yogācāra school of the Buddhists. He taught the Ālaya-vijñānavāda and was popular in the North-Eastern India.

Sixthly, though the colophon always describes the work as *Ārṣa*, it is definitely *pauruṣa* and this needs little proof as we have the candid confession in Mumukṣu 18.1, 3, 9, 68-69. All this makes us

regard the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as a follower of the Yogācārin teacher Asaṃga.

In its philosophy and inner essence the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa reflects the tendencies of a particular age and may be even of a particular locality and local environment. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has palpable inconsistencies and a sweetly vague technology and *śloka-kūṭas* and therefore no author quotes it as an authority to defend a position. Vijñānabhikṣu is the earliest writer in philosophy to use it as authority. Like the Bhagavadgītā, the V.R. also tries to make a synthesis of the Sāṃkhya and Yoga, Sāṃkhyayoga and Yogayoga, uses the BG. terminology; yet it has not the success of the BG. It really should have, considering the times in which it was produced, attempted a synthesis of Yoga, Vedānta and Yogācāra views and doctrines. Nor like the Bhāgavata-purāṇa does it represent the crystallised views of a particular school. The V.R. agrees with the Vedānta as regarding the nature and finality of Brahman and the *jñānamārga* as the means to salvation, yet it does not insist on the identity of the *jīva* and the Brahman. Accepting the Śaiva doctrine of Spanda and Brahman being *nirvāṇa* or *manovilaya*, especially Yogācāra views, it also accepts the notion of *īhaloka* and *paraloka* and *manas* being *daiva*. The synthesis it preaches is more superficial than one grounded on any reasons adduced—it is arbitrary, often nothing more than rhetorical flourish. The various *bhūmis* in Vai. 12.8-5, Mu. 2.10; 10.23, 40-41; 17.50, Ut. 75 and so on, properly *yogabhūmis*, remind one of the name *daśabala śaḍabhiñño daśabalodvayavādī vināyakaḥ* (Amarasimha) and *daśabhūmisvaraḥ*, the latter by the by is the appellation of one of the nine sacred texts of the Eastern Nepal Buddhists. This doctrine of the *bhogabhūmis* and the *yogabhūmis* and its preference of the *mumukṣutā*—its disposition—to the *mokṣa*, the usual orthodox aim, make the V.R. nearer to and point its regard for the doctrines of the Mahāyāna Buddhism, with its nucleus of the Bodhisattva creed of redemption and deliverance. The philosophical groundwork of the V.R. is a complex fabric of theories and doctrines not closely and systematically joined. It treats of Yoga as a Vijñānavādin, its emphasis being on the temperament rather than on the practices. Indeed, it would be a reckless misrepresentation to take the V.R. as a work on the orthodox Yoga system, so much the two in theory and practice differ. The idea of *prapañca* as a projection of the *manas* is

Vedāntic but not so its views regarding *nirvāṇa*, *manas*, *citta* and *ātman*. Its conceptions of *jīva*, *ātman*, and *saṃsāra* are identical with those of the school of Aśaṃga, yet unlike the Yogācārins it believes in the transmigration of soul or rebirths and not in the transmigration of caste or character as in the Buddhistic creed. The V.R. has no stereotyped ways and theories to be prescribed as to religion and forms of worship. In the ethical aspect it teaches a wholesome tolerance and perfect liberalism, *maitrī*, *karuṇā*, *muditā*, *upekṣā* and *śīla*. Thus all things put together, this nature of the ideal temperament held up for realisation has a definite Buddhistic stamp on it—rare in a work having essentially a Hinduite theme dealt with by a Hindu writer.”

All these remarks are to a very great extent true and serve to reveal the Buddhistic element in the V.R. To make this account complete one has to add that the V.R. resembles the Vijñānavādins more than the Śaṃkara Vedānta in holding that external objects do not exist, that *māyā* is in some positive manner related to the Ultimate truth and is not that way indescribable, that the first movement is by sheer chance, *kākatāliya* and that the final state of emancipation is not a stage of bliss as the Vedāntins hold, but a state of characterlessness and vacuity almost. Against Śaṃkara it teaches the *jñāna-karma-samuccaya*. All things put together, the influence of Buddhistic schools and literature is unmistakable and cannot be denied or explained otherwise.

Prof. Bhattacarya need not depend on covert references to Aśaṃga or Buddha, for one thing they are not so convincing and secondly, the respect of the author of the V.R. for Buddha is too obvious. Rāma wants to live like a Buddha who is the ideal. Thus

शान्त अस्तितुमिच्छामि स्वात्मनीव जिनो यथा । I.15.8

परोपकारकारिण्या परार्तिपरितप्तया ।

बुद्ध एव सुखी मन्ये स्वात्मशीतलया धिया ॥ I.26.39

or again

अत्यन्तकरुणाक्रान्तो लोकनाथोऽथवा यतिः । IV.53.41.

Further, Buddha is regarded as an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu.

The doctrine of *vāsanā* and especially the *pravāha-nityatā* as described in

विज्ञेया वासनैषा सा चेतसो मोहदायिनी । III.113.12

चारुवंशलतेवान्तःशून्या निस्सारकोटरा ।

सरित्तरङ्गमालेव न व्युच्छिन्तापि नश्वरी ॥ III.113.13

also is Buddhistic. All this proves that the author of the V.R. had a deep regard for Buddha. As to the suggestion that he was a follower of Asaṃga on the strength of the formations of words with *saṃga* or *asaṃga*, it is very clever but not decisive. In the Bhagavadgītā also we have

अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरूढमूलमसंगशस्त्रेण हृदेन छित्त्वा । XV.3

Do we, taking a pun on *śāstra* and *śāstra* believe that here is a reference to the teachings of Asaṃga ? In philosophical literature *saṃga* and its reverse *asaṃga* are so common that it is uncertain whether these words could be pressed to give any historical meaning.

Secondly, the V.R. could not be regarded as Buddhistic in its very inception. This is not to deny the Buddhistic influence. The relation of the V.R. with the early philosophical literature has been discussed and it would appear that the nucleus of the work must have been essentially Brahmanical at first, if one is thinking of the work of Vasiṣṭha. This work was moulded in the times of and under the influence of Buddhism. The author did not think it necessary to hide his sympathies for Buddha, his philosophy and logic. References have been given to show that Gauḍapāda and Śaṃkara, though as Dr. Dasgupta puts it, 'assimilated Buddhistic idealism' yet have never shown open regard or sympathy for them. The author of the V.R. was a staunch leftist. It is likely that the work in this second phase was known as the *mokṣopāya*. The Upaniṣadic essence represents the first phase of the V.R. and the Buddhistic version represents the second phase.

Prof. Sivaprasada Bhattacharya in his article¹ discusses the relation of the V.R. and the Trika system of Kāśmīra. He has especially drawn attention to the V.R. III.1.9, 10, 11-17, 19.20, 22.42, 47.49; V.8.7, 8-18; V.50.1, 6, 12, 21, 22, 38; VIa.38.5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 22-26; VIa.114.4-6, 9, 15, 16, 20, 28, 29. He remarks 'Not a little of the philosophical content of the V.R. is coloured with the ideology and presented in similar phraseology.' The commentary of Bhāsakara-

1. Annals of the B. O. R. I., Vol. XXXII, 1951, pp. 130-140.

kaṇṭha gives this Śaivite interpretation of the V.R. This commentary has the same antiquity as that of Ānandabodhendra and is perhaps based on older presentations, yet not as popular as the other.

It is clear that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa Vedānta is not of the Śaṅkara brand. It does not out and out subscribe to the view of the essential identity of the *jīva* and the *paramātman* or to the *māyāvāda* dealing with the unreal character of the phenomenal world. The *anirvacanīyatā* or the *anuttartava* of the V.R.—which latter word is reminiscent of its Buddhistic (Dhammapada, II.3) and Śaiva associations utilizes the same expression of the Upaniṣadic original as that of the Śaṅkarites, being different from that of the Vedāntin inasmuch as it rules out the category of the 'one' ultimate principle to which all reality can be reduced;—the *vivartavāda* which is here broached emphasises the *amala*, compositeness and the *sāmarasya*, homogeneity and similarity, of the *tat* and the *tvam* and does not entail the unreality of the appearance. It is difficult to conceive of the one as apart from or divested from the other—VIa.33.3-5 just as it is difficult to conceive the solar orb apart from its constituency of water-*salila*. The *anucitspandana* (with its littleness), the *śakti* in its comprehension and the essential reality (Śiva) from a triple principle-*trika*—and the V.R. in many texts harps on the same view and rules out the *mithyāgraha* (the obstinate clinging of false-hood) deflecting our ill-informed notions, and takes its stand on the *saṁvit*, consciousness, the ultimate reality and as such the integrated Supreme experience, *anākhyā* (incapable of being described) which is the 'per se' of the Supreme Being (*paramaśiva*), involving the idea of *advaya* *Īśvara*, the main plank of the Advaitavāda in the Śaiva system.

This interconnection of the *śakti* concept with the Śiva which in the language of the Śaiva system is *śivaśaktisamīyoga* and is like that of the parental union, has given the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa's Ābhāsa-vāda—IV.39.43-44—differently designated as *pratibimbavāda* the view of the object and the image), or *kalpanāvāda* (Imaginary Determinism to render freely), a form of expression not uncommon in the text, a unique form. The V.R. like the Śaṅkara Vedānta believes in the *prati-bhāsika-sattā*, the appearance as reality of the world and relies on its *arthakāritva* (practical utility). It accounts for the variety and diversity on the score of the *sarva-śakti-mayatva* of Lord Śiva

(VIa.42.23; IV.44.14). Over and above the *jñānaśakti*, *ānandaśakti* and *kriyāśakti*, He has the *svātantryaśakti*, self-determination, or *icchāśakti* or *icchāsattā*, which accounts for the creation and dissolution of the world. The object is *svatantra*, not mixed—*avyāmiśra*—with other entities, the image is incapable of expressing itself, and while representing the objects exists along with and on account of the object. The Śaiva system expresses this *sopāya-prakriyā* in the language of the Tantrāloka and the Tantrasāra of Abhinavagupta frequently in terms of *pratibimbavāda* which is also seen in the V.R. III.122.51, while it indulges in the analogy of a protracted dream-experience—*dirghasvapna* with a lengthened *dirgha* as in the Dhammapada, and introduces the entities of *deśa*, *kāla* and *niyati*—regularity and uniformity—with their infinite variation of regions, hills, dales, cities and hamlets, the sufferings of different births (which merits a special treatment as in the Bhuṣuṇḍopākhyāna (VIa. chapters 14-27) a topic treated ad nauseam even in the Utpatti-prakaraṇa, the third section with its prolixity of *dr̥ṣṭāntas* in the narratives of Līlā, Sūci, Indra, Kṛtrima-Ahalyā, exactly on the lines dilated on in the Śaiva *darsana* (vide chapters VI, VII and VIII of the Tantrāloka).

Śiva and *śakti* are indivisible and the self-same. *Kriyāśakti* or *spanda* residuum accounts for the emergence of experience of the seer and the seen. In ultimate analysis all creation begins in and subsists through *spanda* or *nimeṣa*, to change the root as in the Aitareya Upaniṣad passage, Ch. I.1, *nānyat kiñcana miṣat / sa ikṣata lokānu srjā iti //*

where Śaṅkara takes *nimeṣa* to be coterminus with all *vyāpāras* or functions. This is the very crux of the view; the process is self-ordained, as in the oft-quoted line of the Śvetāśvatara Up. VI.8.

परा अस्य शक्तिर्विविधैव श्रूयते ।

स्वामाविकी ज्ञानबलक्रिया च ॥ VI.8

or in the Tattvasaṃdoha, a Śaiva digest

यदायमनुत्तरमूर्तिर्निजदृष्ट्या निखिलं जगत्प्रप्लुमु ।

पस्पन्दे स स्पन्दः प्रथमं शिवतन्त्रमुच्यते तज्ज्ञैः ॥

Spanda in its connection with the vital breath accounts for the existence of life (VI.101.54); in its connection with logos—*śabda-brahma*—it is at the root of this *saṃsāra*; in its connection with *vāsanā*

or *saṃskāra* it explains the propensity of *karman* (III.4.8-9) which in the view of the V.R. is *puruṣa*, determined by its peculiar movements, *pauruṣa* and predilections; and as in the Śaiva conception, in essence it is not different from the Real Self—*Paramaśiva*. As a consequence of this, attitude of the V.R. towards *jñānakarmasamuccayavāda*, as in the concept of the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, is different from that of the Śaṃkara Vedāntin; in spite of the later ingenious pleadings of the Vedāntin commentators, it is nothing strange that advocating the views of the *karmayogin* and inculcating the mentality of a *jīvanmukta* as in the Bhagavadgītā, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa cannot dismiss *karman* as futile and is loath to regard it in the light of bondage and debasement as the Śaṃkara Advaitin does (VIa.87.16-27).

The theory of deliverence, *muktivāda*, and of its implications, forms another landmark of the V.R. While subscribing unstintedly to the utility of *jñāna* (IV.10.22), it emphasises the aspect of a *svarūpa-prathana*—appearing in its own light—as in the Trika, and insists on *manolaya*, *amanibhāva*, or the deadenning and dulling of the *citta* as the inevitable prerequisite (V.74.85-6), for it is patent that *mano hi ātmavadhaṃ nāma nāṭakam parinṛtyati*.

The ideology and phraseology smack of an alien background of thought as if brought into line with the teachings of Gauḍapāda—a synthetic way of approach which ushered in and played a great part in the groundwork of shaping the Trika system. The implication of *saṃvit* or *svasaṃvedana*—V.72.21, 33, 34, 36, 37 and the adjustment—*sāmarasya*, *saṃghaṭṭa* of all issues involved read like a chapter taken from the Śaiva works, where the *ātman* is of the nature of Śiva, not contracted and hedged by limitations, inherent and hereditary. This may be compared with the Tantrāloka-vṛtti, p.3.

मोक्षो हि नाम नैवान्यः स्वरूपप्रथनं हि सः ।
स्वरूपं चात्मनः संबित्...

In the V.R., VIb. ch.38, where the Śaiva inspiration is traceable as in the original work and which ends with the concept of *citrādīpa*, a phrase found in the original and since popularised declares—

निर्वासना निष्कलना शान्ता पुरुषताऽस्तु ते ।
शस्त्रेण यन्त्रवाहेण बाह्या दारुमयी यथा ॥

From this standpoint, *bandha* and *mokṣa* are imaginary (III.100.37-43). It is in determined character—*vāsanā*—and self-regulation that the key to all problems lies. The nullifying or deadening efforts of the senses, *karaṇagrāma*, consummating in the attitude towards material pleasures is the ultimate goal, the Śaiva *pada* (VIa.127.6) and the aids are the means that involve the harmonious adjustment of *karman* and *īñāna* (VIa.128.44-48).

This insistence on an adjusted frame of mind, *susama-cittatā*, and its consequent indifference towards bliss or pleasure, *sukha*, even, mark out the reaction, *vaimukhya*, of the V.R. to the Vedāntic conception of *mokṣa*, so much so that in certain passages it reads like a recapitulation of the view presented in certain polemical works like the Nyāyamañjarī. Considered in that light, *mokṣa* appertains none the less to the domain of volition than to that of cognition, and the V.R. in and throughout its lengthy discourses has this objective in view. In its detailed treatment of those obstacles which are designated as in the Śaiva system, *malas*, not perhaps unmixed with the primitive connotation of that term in the shape of physical impurity, [Dhammapada, XVIII.2, 5, 8, 9, 17. In the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa VIa.41.6-7, we read

अविद्यां श्रेष्ठयाऽश्रेष्ठं क्षालयन्निह तिष्ठति ।
मलं मलेनापहरन्मुक्तिज्ञो रजको यथा ॥
काकतालीयवत्पञ्चादविद्याक्षय आगते ।
प्रपश्यत्यात्मनैवात्मा स्वभावस्यैष निश्चयः ॥ VIa.41.6-7.

That view is reminiscent of the Pratyabhijñā creed when *prapaśyati* is understood as 'recognises.' The Śaiva position is stated thus

मलश्रावरको माया भावोपादानकारणम् ।
कर्म स्यात्सहकार्येव सुखदुःखोद्भवं प्रति ॥

A more general statement as in the Tantrasāra, p.5 is

अज्ञानं किल बन्धहेतुरुदितः शास्त्रे मलं तत्स्मृतम् ।]

as a few passages bear out, of the *puryaṣṭaka* (in its varied interpretations including that in the Śaiva Āgama) and incidentally in its reference to the thirty-six *padas* or *tattvas*, VIa.39.15, of the system, the V.R. reveals unmistakably its affiliation to the Trika. The Yoga, necessary for the purpose of eradicating the *malas* in their threefold

division of that system, which aptly gives the name to the work, is what is formulated in the well known verse

योगो नान्यः क्रिया नान्या तत्त्वाख्ण्डा हि या मतिः ।
स्वचित्तवासनाशान्त्यै सा क्रियेत्यभिधीयते ॥

The *tattva* here is the *tattva* of the Śaivas—the *sāmarasya* or adjustment. It is on the cultivation of a frame of mind, a *kriyā*, that the ultimate problem of life thus lies.

The Bhagavadgītā has resorted to a similar mode of expression and claims itself to be a Yogaśāstra. The obstacles in the way of such a frame of mind, there, too find specific mention and it is significant that these *kaluṣas* or *upadravas* are comprehensively discussed in the Kāśmīra recension of the text, which Abhinavagupta embodies and comments on in his commentary after III.37. The extra verses are

भवत्येष कथं कृष्ण कथं चैव विवर्धते ।
किमात्मकः किमाचारस्तन्ममाचक्ष्व पृच्छतः ॥

श्रीभगवानुवाच—एष सूक्ष्मः परः शत्रुर्वेहिनामिन्द्रियैः सह ।
सुखतन्त्र इवासीनो मोदयन् पार्थ तिष्ठति ॥
कामक्रोधमयो घोरः स्तम्भहर्षसमुद्भवः ।
अहंकारोऽभिमानात्मा दुस्तरः पापकर्मभिः ॥
हर्षमस्य निवर्त्येष्ट शोकमस्य ददाति च ।
मयं चास्य करोत्येष मोदयंस्तु मुहुर्मुहुः ॥
स एष कलुषः क्षुद्रच्छिद्रप्रेक्षी धनंजय ।

रजःप्रवृत्तो मोहात्मा मानुषाणामुपद्रवः ॥ M.P.(N.S. edn), 175

These verses bring out the Śaiva standpoint and their potency incidentally establishes the Śaiva thinker's preference for his system. His assertion *svam tattvam śivanāmakam* (VIa. 41. 24) at once establishes the thinker to be of Śaiva denomination. Abhinava's note

एष तावत् सूक्ष्म उत्पत्तिसमयेऽलक्ष्य इन्द्रियेणैवं च वर्तमानः
सुखं तन्त्रयितुमिवोत्पद्यते । वस्तुतस्तु दुःखमोहमयस्तामसत्वात् ।

hints at the delusive and obtruse nature as much of *mukti* as of these *malas* of the three types (*āṇava-kāma-karma*) described as *malatraya* (VIa.128.60), and traceable to the *vāsanā* or predestinating impressions.

In the emotional aspect the V.R. insists on its representation of *ātmārcana* or contemplation (worship of self) as the inseparable concomitant of spiritual life (VIa.127.33). This is what we may term the theistic bias as different from the agnostic approach not at all indiscernible in the orthodox Advaitavāda. In chapters 35-48 of the last section we have the *bāhya* and the *mānasa* forms of *pūjā* (worship) differentiated and the nature of the deity investigated on the lines of the Spandaśāstra or as in the Paramārthasāra, a handy and lucid exposition of the system. Utpaladeva, the Śaiva philosopher, ecstatic over the utility of the worship of Lord Śiva, the *śānta paramātman*—

अहो साधुतमः कोऽपि शिवपूजामहोत्सवः ।

षट्त्रिंशतोऽपि तत्त्वानां सीमा यत्रोल्लसत्यलम् ॥

That in the V.R. is regarded as the culmination of the adored—*pūjā-sīmānta*. It is noteworthy that the important abridgments not excluding the Yogavāsiṣṭhasāra in its ten sections, included *ātmārcana* which is synchronous with an idealising of Lord Supreme, i.e. Śiva. In its exoteric side, *bāhya-pūjana*, the worship of Lord is as much efficacious as that of the *aśvamedhayajña* highly applauded in orthodox ritualism. In its esoteric aspect, it is that of the soul, the lord of the *śarīra*, *śarīra-nāyaka*, the symbol of the *saṃvit* illumining our personality. The body is the house of the deity, *devagrha*, and it is in a strain of idealizing the real or realizing the ideal that this affair has been conceived and introduced. As in the Śaiva school, there is a fling in the V.R. too at the Vaiṣṇava brand of *bhakti* and self-surrender, which it is held fails to achieve the highest end (V.43.20-29).

The *dikṣā*, spiritual initiation, which coincides with the *parameśvara-śaktipāta*, in its unique manner represents what may be regarded as the supernatural and supersensuous sequel of Kāśmīra Śaivism, its Tantra adjunct and looms large in the classic treatises thereof—Tantrāloka, chs. XI-XX. The V.R. occasionally refers to this theory of grace, *maheśānugraha*, and regards it as the rightful outcome of *braddhā* to gods and superiors which include *siddhakulas* and *gurus*. *Tasmāt kulādṛte nānyat saṃsāroddharaṇam prati*—Tantrāloka, p.247. These are but the steps to *ātmajñāna* (VIa.41.13-16). No amount of attainments can make amends for this, for one gets his dues, *prāptavya*, only through the grace of the Lord. The highest type of knowledge

can only come through *śaktipāta* (VIa.127.4, 38, 58), which is intensified through *vairāgya*, *viveka*, *devapūjā* and the like. The Lord as Bhairava dispenses protection to the panic-stricken (*bhīru*) people if they flock to him. Etymologically, as in all reality He is theirs (VIa.29.107-112). It is attendance on the lotus-feet of the *guru* that secures knowledge and finally emancipation, and not asceticism, gifts and visits to pilgrimages, which are at best *anupāyas*, i.e. plausible but not the very best means in the Trika sense of the work (II.10.22). The *guru* is the *deśika*, *ācārya*, *dīkṣaka*, or *cumbaka* ensures *jñāna*, but a *guru* of the right type like Vasiṣṭha comes through exceptional luck : *Gurutvaṁ śaktipātena tatkṣaṇādeva darśitam* (VIa.128.60).

It is the attainment and the earnestness of the *śiṣya* that is the root of enlightenment (VIa.128.63). The *jīvanmukta-mumukṣu*—the *sādhaka* par excellence—is the model of the V.R. as of the Bhagavad-gītā, and this accounts for its practical value and general appeal as a thought-provoking classic. The Śaiva *darśana* teachers instead of pitching their aims too high, tried to come down to the level of the common man, and some of them (Abhinavagupta in his Śaiva redaction of the short manual Paramārthasāra in *kārikās* 61-73) have dilated on the characteristics of the *jīvanmukta*, or the *bhinnājñānagranthīn*, or the *jñāna-agni-dagdha-karman* in the language of the Bhagavadgītā. It is the Yoga regimen of the V.R. that is eminently suitable for preparing such aspirants. As Sureśvara puts it :

योगाभ्यासवशाद्धेन मनो निर्विषयं कृतम् ।

निर्वृतः स पुमान् सद्यो जीवन्मुक्तो भविष्यति ॥

The well-known passages like I.18.19-35; III.8.19-25; III.9.4-13; V.36.24-26, 77-79; and V.50.55-63 are high-class homilies on various subjects which is hard to imitate.

Here is given a very lengthy quotation, practically the whole article of Prof. Bhattacharya as it is of very great importance for a proper understanding of not only the philosophy but also the development of the text of the V.R. Besides the Upaniṣadic essence and the Buddhistic material, the V.R. has borrowed a good deal from the Tantras and the Trika philosophy of Kāśmīra. Abhinavagupta played a very great part in the development of this philosophy and it was he who produced most of the literature. The V.R. presumes all this development and is possibly written under that influence. It was

Abhinava who remodelled Śeṣa's Paramārthasāra and so it is quite likely that some one, a few centuries later, in the same land followed the example of the master, Abhinava, by remodelling the Mokṣopāya in the present V.R. The mixture of all the doctrines is so complete that it is crystal clear that the V.R. has not merely a distant knowledge of the Śaiva philosophy but that it has developed quite in the midst of that philosophy. Just as it would be now difficult to separate the Upaniṣadic or the Buddhistic content so also it would be impossible to separate the Śaiva element. It is this very blending of the Kāśmīra Śaiva Advaitism with the Upaniṣadic Brahman Advaitism that has been responsible for the important divergencies that the V.R. has with the Śāṅkara Vedānta. It is, therefore, that Dr. Dasgupta remarks : "While there are thus unmistakable influences of Vijñānavāda and Gauḍapāda on the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, it seems to have developed in close association with the Śaiva, as its doctrines of Spanda or immanent activity, so clearly show." The Buddhistic element represents the second phase of the text while the Kāśmīra Śaiva element marks the final phase. When the text came into being in Kāśmīra it had all these elements incorporated into it. Thus the present V.R. is a Kāśmīra Śaiva text with a Buddhistic and Upaniṣadic material but each of these represents its history in a chronological order. A text revised and remodelled twice in Kāśmīra, once under the influence of Nāgārjuna and next under the influence of Abhinava, the original text of Vasiṣṭha got developed to its present form, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

Prof. Bhattacharya has referred to the attack on Vaiṣṇava-*bhakti* in the V.R. But it is to be remembered that the whole of Prahlāda *ākhyāna* in the Upaśama *prakaraṇa* is under Vaiṣṇava influence. The glorification of Lord Nārāyaṇa is too obvious. Thus

संपन्नोऽस्मि सर्वत्र नारायणमयो ह्यहम् । V.31.37

नमो नारायणायेति मन्त्रः सर्वार्थसाधकः ॥ V.31.38

अविष्णुः पूजयन्विष्णुं न पूजाफलभागभवेत् ।

विष्णुर्भूत्वा यजेद्विष्णुमयं विष्णुरहं स्थितः ॥ V.31.40

क्रोधमः प्राकृतारम्भो हीनकर्म्मरतिः सदा ।

वराको दानवो हीनजातिर्भक्तिः क वैष्णवी ॥ V.32.32

वैष्णवेन प्रसादेन स्वसमुत्थेन चारुणा ॥ V.35.42

स्वभावाद्भुग्वानात्मा विष्णोर्ब्रह्म सनातनम् । V.35.51

आत्मन्यकारणेनैव भूतानां कारणेन च ।

सृष्ट्यर्थं वपुरात्तं हि वासुदेवमयात्मना ॥ V.42.20

यो हि विष्णुः स एवात्मा यो ह्यात्मासौ जनार्दनः ।

विष्णवात्मशब्दौ पर्यायौ यथा विटपिपादपौ ॥ V.43.6.

There cannot be any doubt that the story is under a strong Vaiṣṇava influence. So, side by side with the Śaiva it also has the Vaiṣṇava element and further it is to be noted that by the inclusion of the whole of the Bhagavadgītā as an episode it has included the Pāñcarātra text as well. So Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Bhāgavata elements are all mixed into the V.R. This will only illustrate as to how the author of the V.R. intended a grand synthesis of Hindu thought. The Bhagavadgītā attempted a synthesis of only the diverse philosophical elements but here is a synthesis of diverse sects. This was possible only in Kāśmīra where as Kalhaṇa tells us all these different sects lived in harmony, not only among themselves but in harmony with Buddhism too.

Further Dr. Bhattacharya thinks that the Yoga as known to the V.R. is not the classical Yoga. In view of the definition of Yoga as *cittavṛttinirodaḥ* and the references that are to be found to the Kuṇḍalini, Kum̐bhaka, the various complications connected with them, it is clear that the knowledge of the author of the Yoga system with all its developments was complete. The author has acquaintance with the Vaiśeṣikas as well as with the Naiyāyikas too. Even the famous line of the Cārvāka school *bhasmībhūtasya dehasya punarāga-manam kutaḥ* is behind the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa

यावज्जीवं सुखं जीवेन्नस्ति मृत्युरगोचरः ।

भस्मीभूतस्य शान्तस्य पुनरागमनं कुतः ॥ Vīb.100.2.

The various systems and schools are frequently referred to in III.5.6; III.96.49-50 :

नैयायिकैरितरथा तादृशैः परिकल्पिताः ।

अन्यथा कल्पिताः सांख्यं श्रार्वाकैरपि चान्यथा ॥

जमिनोयं श्रार्हतैश्च बौद्धैर्वैशेषिकैस्तथा ।

अन्यैरपि विचित्रैस्तैः पाञ्चरात्रादिभिस्तथा ॥ III.96.49-50

and again in IV.21.24-30; V.87.18-21; Vīb.101.10-12, 173.34. What is of further interest is that the V.R. indulges in the refutation of the *parama-aṇukāraṇa-vāda* in Vīb.103.65-70 and the entire passage is very strongly reminiscent of the refutation of the same school by

Śaṅkara under the Bādarāyaṇa Sūtras II.ii.13-17. It appears that the author had the sūtra 'ubhayathāpi na karmāstadabhāvaḥ' in view, for the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa adds

परमाणुसमूहा ये जगदित्यप्यवास्तवम् ।
 शशशृङ्गं धनुःप्रख्यमज्ञानादभिधीयते ॥
 परमाणुसमूहश्चेत्संभूय कुरुते जगत् ।
 यदृच्छयैव तमसि शीर्यते च यदृच्छया ॥
 तदङ्गमिङ्गते नित्यं देशे देशे गृहे गृहे ।
 अपूर्वात्मरजः शृङ्गं खातं वा स्याद्दिने दिने ॥
 न च तद् दृश्यते किञ्चित्कस्य तत्कर्म तादृशम् ।
 भवेद्व्यर्थमभव्यस्य जडास्तु परमाणवः ॥
 नाबुद्धिपूर्वं तत्कर्म संभवत्यङ्ग कस्यचित् ।
 बुद्धिपूर्वं तु यद्व्यर्थं कुर्यादुन्मत्तको हि कः ॥
 जडस्य बुद्धिपूर्वेहा मरुतो नास्ति तां विना ।
 न संभवत्यणुचयो नान्यत्कर्तोपपद्यते ॥ VIb.103.65-70.

This clearly establishes the contact between the V.R. and the polemical section of the Bādarāyaṇa Sūtras and the comments of Śaṅkara on the same.

From all this discussion it will be clear that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is thoroughly acquainted with all the important schools of Indian philosophy and also with the very vast literature belonging to these different systems. In many places it refers to the vast literature before it, the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the Epics, the Ākhyānas and the Purāṇas. It has acquaintance with the Dharmaśāstras too, at least with Manu, as can be seen from the observations on women in VIa.109.25-30.

Considering the very vast literature that the author of the V.R. has gone through and the cleverness with which he has blended this material into one harmonious whole, his boast, for which he has very appropriately chosen Vyāsa's famous words

यदिहास्ति तदन्यत्र यन्नेहास्ति न तत्कचित् ।
 इमं समस्तविज्ञानशास्त्रकोशं विदुर्बुधाः ॥ III.8.12

is more than justified and is certainly no insolent boast.

CHAPTER V

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE EPIC

We have so far seen in the foregoing pages the vast material which the author of the V.R. has deliberately used in the general make-up of this work and which makes it in a real sense of the term 'all-embracing'. With its knowledge of the different philosophical tendencies and its attempt to form them into a synthetic whole, with its flowery and highly ornate style, even more ornate than the Rāmāyaṇa which is the first ornate poem, and with the vast classical literature from which the author constantly lifts; there cannot be any doubt as to the fact that it stands pretty late in the literary tradition. 'It belongs to the age of the ornate style and presumes practically the whole of philosophical literature. Works of the pre-classical period, the Upaniṣads, the Epics, the Buddhistic schools, the Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, the Kāśmīra philosophy of Spanda are alluded to with the same deep acquaintance. In spite of the very rich and varied material, the V.R. does appear to teach a particular philosophy which is very akin, though different, to the philosophical thought of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara. Around this central thought all the material is woven. It has a closer relation to Śaṅkara's Vedānta than to any other philosophical school though it refers to all alike. The stamp of Śaṅkara is almost unmistakable. In the different *sargas* and portions the thought is often contradictory or an attempt to fit in the thought in its own mould is visible, and the prose portions ill-suit the otherwise very smooth verse-texture. In general, a deliberate working up is too plain to the critical eye and one is tempted to pass the judgement which Hopkins passed on the Mbh. : "It appears to be a heterogeneous collection of strings wound about a nucleus almost lost sight of."¹ The present V.R. is an enlargement of some old work, the nucleus, the name of which has been preserved in the title 'Vāsiṣṭha' work by Vasiṣṭha.

1. The Great Epic of India, p. 363.

Vasiṣṭha, the sage of the Vedic fame, is very famous for his *brahma-jñāna*. His rivalry with Viśvāmitra is narrated with much fervour and every time the greatness and the equanimity of the mind of Vasiṣṭha are impressed on our mind. Even the calamity of the loss of his hundred sons did not disturb him. Though like a frail human being he too had his own weak moments and under the unbearable stress of the calamity wanted to end his life by throwing himself into a river, yet the general impression on our minds is that of a sage very wise and philosophical in temperament. Several stories even in the Epics refer to his greatness. If the Ṛgveda shows him to be the high-priest and philosopher of Sudās, the victorious king in the Dāśarājña war, perhaps as the architect of the victory, the Epics also show him to be the priest of the famous Ikṣvākus in Ayodhyā. Kālidāsa makes him send a philosophic message to Aja on the sudden and tragic death of Indumatī and in that message too a sort of idealistic realism is clearly reflected. Vasiṣṭha's characteristic philosophy appears to be to take life as it is by understanding it fully. Vasiṣṭha's personality as could be gathered from the Vedic literature can be described as under :

He is a celebrated Vedic sage to whom many hymns are ascribed. Manu enumerates him as one of the seven great sages and also as one of the ten *Prajāptis*. Right from the Vedic to the Epic times the whole literature presents an account and picture of a very keen rivalry between him and Viśvāmitra, a *kṣatriya* sage who aspired to be a *brāhmaṇa*. Vasiṣṭha possessed a *kāmadhenu* (Nandini) who granted him all things, *vasu*, he desired and hence his name. Like Manu he has a law-book under his name. At times Vasiṣṭha is classed among the *Prajāpatīs* and is thus represented as a son of Brahmā; yet there is another Vedic story which makes him a son of Mitra and Varuṇa. When these two *ādityas* happened to see Urvaśī, their semen dropped down and from that sprang Vasiṣṭha. With all these great points about him, Vasiṣṭha's career appears to be very interesting in the light of the hymns ascribed to him in the Ṛgveda. A very peculiar hymn is the one which Vasiṣṭha addressed to the dogs which attacked him as he entered the house of some one (ṚV. VII.55). The hymn is, as explained by the commentators, used as a sleep-charm used by the thieves and burglars at the time of entering the houses of others at night. Another more charitable interpretation offered is

that it is a love-charm to be used by the lover as he enters the house of his beloved. The commentators while explaining the circumstances under which the hymn was composed go on to observe that once Vasiṣṭha tried to enter the house of Varuṇa at night in search of food. He had a fast for three days and was almost in a calamity. At that time Varuṇa's dog barked at him and to appease the dog Vasiṣṭha composed this hymn. This interpretation appears to be merely a conjecture for Varuṇa's dog is not otherwise mentioned in the Veda which connects the dogs with Yama. In other places Vasiṣṭha speaks of having entered Varuṇa's palace and hence the commentators must have thought of this story. Vasiṣṭha clearly is a hero of some adventure though the nature of the adventure which gave an occasion for this interesting hymn must remain a mystery to us. There is again another hymn which throws an interesting light on his character. Vasiṣṭha appears to make a declaration that he would die instantaneously were he a magician—*yadi yātudhāno asmi* (RV. VII.104.15). On account of his deeds Vasiṣṭha, it appears, was charged by the people to be guilty of witch-craft or black magic and in this hymn he is denying the charge. If these are rather awkward moments in Vasiṣṭha's life there are others which are very sublime and raise him in our estimate. If the rest of the Vedic poets are attached to this or that god, it is in a way reflective of Vasiṣṭha's character that he was extremely devoted to god Varuṇa, the god of morals. Time and again Vasiṣṭha is seen invoking Varuṇa requesting him very earnestly to forgive him his moral lapses. He appears to have been visited by dropsy which was interpreted as the punishment by Varuṇa. The songs (RV. VII.86.88) in which he seeks reconciliation with Varuṇa, who is angry with him are very sublime and rightly does Dr. Bhandarkar trace the origin of *bhakti* in these songs. Vasiṣṭha's intimacy with Varuṇa is of special importance for he tells us that he had the privilege of being admitted into the residence of the god and had the good fortune of having a pleasure-voyage in the god's yacht. In fact he was admitted into Varuṇa's very self. Vasiṣṭha is speaking here of his mystic experience and perhaps of the Vedāntic realisation of identity with the God. In fact what is of greater interest and importance is the fact that Varuṇa gave some mysterious knowledge to Vasiṣṭha. The reference indicates that this secret knowledge imparted to Vasiṣṭha by Varuṇa was metaphysical in content. It is

further to be remembered that Varuṇa is constantly spoken of as the *asura* and as such is vitally connected with *māyā* for we have repeatedly *asurasya māyā*. Varuṇa is many times spoken of as the creator of the Universe, upholder of the order and punisher of the guilty. Varuṇa is vitally connected with Truth as well. Varuṇa's limitless knowledge is described in very glorious terms in the Veda and in a way this is his special characteristic. Knowledge, Truth appear to be his very essence. In fact Varuṇa has all the characteristics in him which made him the Truth and Brahman, the mysterious power of the Kena Upaniṣad. I cannot resist the temptation of quoting Dr. Muir on Varuṇa as his remarks bear testimony to the thesis being made out here that it is Varuṇa who is the Brahman of the Upaniṣads.

"The grandest cosmical functions are ascribed to Varuṇa. Possessed of illimitable resources (or knowledge) this divine being has fashioned—meted out—and upholds heaven and earth; he dwells in all worlds like a sovereign ruler; indeed the three worlds are embraced in him. He made the golden and revolving sun to shine in the firmament. The wind which resounds through the atmosphere is his breath. He has opened out boundless paths for the sun and has hollowed out the channels for the rivers which flow by his command. By his wonderful contrivance the rivers pour out their waters into the one ocean but never fill it. His ordinances are fixed and unassailable. They rest on him unshaken as on a mountain. Through the operation of his laws the moon walks in brightness, and the stars which appear in the nightly sky mysteriously vanish in daylight. Neither the birds flying in the air nor the rivers in their ceaseless flow can attain a knowledge of his power or his wrath. His messengers behold both worlds. He knows the flight of the birds in the sky, the paths of ships on the ocean, the course of the far-travelling wind, and beholds all the things that have been done or shall be done. No creature can even wink without him. He witnesses men's truth and falsehood. He instructs the Rishi Vasiṣṭha in the mysteries but his secrets and those of Mitra are not to be revealed to the foolish."... "He has unlimited control over the destinies of mankind. He has a hundred thousand remedies, and is supplicated to show his wide and deep benevolence and drive away all evil and sin, to untie sin like a rope and remove it. He is entreated not to steal away, but to prolong life and to spare the suppliant who daily transgresses his laws. In many places mention is

made of his bonds or nooses with which he seizes and punishes transgressors. Mitra and Varuṇa are conjointly spoken of in one passage as being barriers against falsehood, furnished with many nooses which the hostile mortal cannot surmount, and in another place, Indra and Varuṇa are described as binding with bonds not formed of rope. On the other hand, Varuṇa is said to be gracious even to him who has committed sin. He is the wise guardian of immortality, and a hope is held out that he and Yama reigning in blessedness shall be beheld in the next world by the righteous. The attributes and functions ascribed to Varuṇa impart to his character a moral elevation and sanctity far surpassing that attributed to any other Vedic deity."

Scholars of Vedic literature are often found remarking that the Veda is a history of Varuṇa's downfall as it is felt that in later periods Varuṇa loses his grandeur. Indra is invoked more often and in the Brāhmaṇa period he is given a very subordinate position in the *yajña*. In the Upaniṣads there is possibly no reference to him except in the *Vāruṇi vidyā*. It is very difficult to imagine that such a prominent god could have been so totally forgotten by the Vedic people in so short a time. The truth perhaps lies the other way. The Vedic literature does not show any decline or downfall of Varuṇa but reveals a transformation of his into an abstract principle—Brahman. In this connection it is worthwhile to remember Varuṇa's relation to *jñāna* or Knowledge, his part in the creation, maintenance and finally, friendship with Yama engaged in *saṁhāra*, his connection with Truth and lastly with *māyā*, being of very great importance for the Upaniṣadic philosophy. The whole philosophy of that period is based on this basic material. It is but natural that Brāhmaṇas should not show any development of this trend of thought as they favoured the ritualistic *karman* to this *jñāna*. The transformation of Varuṇa religion into Upaniṣadic Brahman philosophy must have been a contemporary development but going on in only restricted circles, Vasiṣṭha and his followers. It is very significant that Vasiṣṭha also loses his importance in the sense that he is not seen to be very active in the later periods. The R̥gveda, however, tells us that Varuṇa had given mysterious knowledge to Vasiṣṭha. Was it a peep into his *māyā*? Thus Vasiṣṭha tells in RV. VII.87.4,

उवाच मे वरुणो मेधिराय त्रिःसुप्त नामाध्वया विभर्ति ।

विद्वान्पदस्य गुह्या न वोच्युगाय विप्र उपराय शिक्षन् ॥

In spite of the notes by Sāyaṇa and Vedic scholars the passage remains a real difficulty. Yet one thing is clear that Vasiṣṭha here speaks of knowledge imparted to him by Varuṇa to be transmitted to future generations. Another point of interest and importance is that Varuṇa is described as covering himself with a coat of gold—*bibhrat drāpiṃ hiraṇmayam* (RV. I.25.13). Remembering the fact about the very close relation of Varuṇa with Truth and this reference to the coat of gold, the lines in the Īśāvāsyaopaniṣad gain a new significance.

हिरण्यमयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् । Īśāvāsya I.15.

It will be seen that it is likely that Varuṇa himself has been transformed into the Truth of the times of the Upaniṣads. One might remember the note by Muir given above and then turn to the famous Bṛhadāraṇyaka III *adhyāya*, 5, 6 and 7 *brāhmaṇas*. This Varuṇa, again, declares Brahman to Bhṛgu in the Bhṛguvalli of the Taittirīya Upaniṣad. Varuṇa's relation with Brahman philosophy is further indicated by the tradition recorded by Madhvācārya and many other commentators. According to this tradition, the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad was revealed by or to Varuṇa who took the guise of a frog (*maṇḍūka*). According to Madhva, Vyāsātīrtha and Śrīnivāsa the prose passages and the Kārikās of the Book I are handed down by Varuṇa in the form of *maṇḍūka*, a frog. Madhva in his commentary on the said Upaniṣad quotes two passages from the Padma-purāṇa and the Harivaṃśa respectively

ध्यायन् नारायणं देवं प्रणवेन समाहितः ।

मण्डूकरूपिवरुणस्तुष्टाव हरिमव्ययम् ॥

and

इति मण्डूकरूपी सन्ददर्श वरुणः श्रुतिम् ।

Madhva regards the Kārikās as the *mantras* which are said to have been visioned by Brahmā, the Creator. He quotes on this point

ब्रह्मदृष्टानतो मन्त्रान् प्रमाणं सलितेश्वरः ।

अत्र श्लोका भवन्तीति चकारं पृथक्पृथक् ॥

Thus there is a weighty tradition which regards the said Upaniṣad as being handed down by Varuṇa. For our present discussion the relation of the Gauḍapāda-Kārikās with the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad is also very important, but of that later.

All these references reveal from the Vedic times to the times of this tradition Varuṇa to be a philosopher or *draṣṭā* of the Brahman philosophy. Further it is clear that right from the Vedic times to the times of Purāṇas, Vasiṣṭha has been recognised as a Brahmajñānin. In the Ṛgveda itself Vasiṣṭha tells us that he received secret knowledge from Varuṇa. Again, in the Ṛgveda *māyā* is essentially connected with Varuṇa, the *asura*, which later on is transferred to the *akṣara*. All these scattered pieces when put together give us the idea that Vasiṣṭha was the first and privileged sage to receive the highest metaphysical knowledge from the Divine Being. Though it will not be possible for us to know precisely the nature and content of this knowledge which Vasiṣṭha received from Varuṇa yet some guess can be made about it. Thus, Brahman and *māyā* must have in that philosophy played an important part. Considering the context of the Māṇḍūkya-Kārikās the philosophy must have taught a similar idealistic philosophy. Vasiṣṭha's claim to be the first student of Vedānta philosophy and a teacher of unparalleled authority and eminence is supported from the Ṛgvedic times. This philosophy must have been Advaita philosophy. A guess may be hazarded in this context. Vasiṣṭha speaks of having annihilated 'Bheda' in Ṛ.V. VII.18.19. It is usual to understand this Bheda as some Demon or an enemy of Sudāsa. Sāyaṇa's explanation is

भेदस्य भिनन्ति मर्यादा इति भेदो नास्तिकः । तस्य ।

यद्वा । भेदो नाम सुदासः शत्रुः कश्चित् । तस्येत्यर्थः ।

A similar explanation is given at another place (Ṛ.V. VII.83.4). When Historical Interpretation reigns supreme it would appear as fanciful to suggest an Allegorical Interpretation. But from the point of view of Vedānta philosophy it would mean that when Bheda is destroyed, Abheda is realised. It is very significant that Bheda is referred to in only two places in the whole of the Ṛgveda and that these two places are in the seventh *maṇḍala* of Vasiṣṭha. If Bheda were a non-Aryan King as is commonly supposed and his defeat a feat of Indra or Varuṇa, then it should have been referred to elsewhere as well as are the other feats connected with Vala or Ahi, Śaṁbara or Śuṣṇa. A critical study of the seventh *maṇḍala* of Ṛgveda reveals that Vasiṣṭha is far advanced in ideas and philosophy when compared with the other Vedic sages. He is the first of the Vedic sages to have received instruction from a Divine Being, to have realised a 'merging' identity

with the Divine being—*kadānu antar-Varuṇe Bhuvāni* (R.V. VII.86.2) and to speak of the destruction of Bheda. Rightly does tradition regard him as the originator of the Advaita philosophy—especially of the school of Śaṅkara. For it is said in a verse giving the *guru-paramparā* of the Śaṅkara *pīṭhas*

ॐ नारायणं पद्मभवं वसिष्ठं
शक्तिं च तत्पुत्रपराशरं च ।
व्यासं शुक्रं गोडपादं महान्तं
गोविन्दयोगीन्द्रमथास्य शिष्यम् ॥

Nārāyaṇa Padmabhava is the originator and it is to be remembered that Madhvācārya while giving the tradition of Varuṇa giving the knowledge as a *maṇḍūkā* observes that

मण्डूकरूपिणा वरुणेन चतुरूपो नारायणोऽत्र स्तूयते ।

and for Padmabhava it is to be rememebered that he observes

ब्रह्मदृष्टानतो मन्त्रान् प्रमाणं सलिलेश्वरः ।
अत्र श्लोका भवन्तीति चकारं पृथक्पृथक् ॥

Thus Madhva is giving essentially the same tradition which is given in the stanza which gives the *guru-paramparā* of the Śaṅkara *pīṭhas* for it is easy to understand god Varuṇa being taken as Nārāyaṇa or Padmabhava. The second teacher is Vasiṣṭha and this is also but natural in face of Vasiṣṭha's own statement in the Ṛgveda that Varuṇa has declared to him mysterious knowledge. Varuṇa is essentially connected with Truth, Knowledge and his nature is infinite, all encompassing sky and thus it will be seen how this is precisely the *satyam jñānam anantam* Brahman of the Upaniṣads and the Vedānta. Vasiṣṭha had the *anubhava* of identity with Varuṇa as his hymns indicate. Vasiṣṭha further appears to be connected with many different stories in the Purāṇas which only serve to reveal his greatness. The story of Sudāsa is given in the Veda and the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, his conflict with Viśvāmitra forms the topic of stories in the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa, the story of Vasiṣṭha and Nimi is given in the Viṣṇu-purāṇa while the Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa represents him as the priest of Hariścandra. Throughout he is connected with the House of Ikṣvākus. The Viṣṇu-purāṇa tells us that Urjā, one of the daughters of Dakṣa was his wife, while the Bhāgavata-purāṇa gives the famous

Arundhati as his wife. All these accounts put together give us the impression of a very great personality, and so he was to his contemporaries even; for otherwise an account of supernatural account of his birth would not have appeared in the R.V. VII.33.11-13.

उ॒तासि॑ मै॒त्रावरु॑णो व॒सिष्ठो॑र्व॒श्या ब्र॒ह्मन् म॒नु॒सोऽधि॑ जा॒तः ।
 द्र॒प्सं स्कु॑लं ब्र॒ह्मणा॑ दै॒व्येन॑ वि॒श्वे दे॒वाः पु॒ष्करे॑ त्वाद॒न्त ॥
 स प्र॑क॒ृत उ॒भय॑स्य प्रवि॒द्वान्स॑हस्र॒दान उ॒त वा स॒दानः॑ ।
 य॒मेन॑ त॒तं प॑रि॒धिं व॑यिष्यन्न॒प्सर॑सः प॒रि ज॒ज्ञे व॑सिष्ठः ॥
 सु॒त्रे ह॑ जा॒तावि॑ष्टिता नमो॒भिः कु॒म्भे र॑तैः सि॒षिच॑तुः स॒मानं॑ ।
 ततो॑ ह॒ मान॑ उ॒दिया॑य म॒ध्यात् ततो॑ जा॒तमृ॑षिमाहुर्व॒सिष्ठम् ॥

Dr. Muir observes : 'Vasiṣṭha, according to all accounts must have been possessed of a vitality altogether superhuman. It appears that the name Vasiṣṭha is used not to denote merely a person belonging to a family so called, but to represent the founder of the family himself as taking part in the transactions of many successive ages.'

Did this Vasiṣṭha not write anything or make any effort to hand down the knowledge he had received ? It is very difficult to imagine that Vasiṣṭha did not carry out any literary activity. The Vāsiṣṭha-dharma-sūtra is already known to be studied by the scholars. Other works mentioned in this context are Vasiṣṭha-kalpa, Vasiṣṭha-tantra, Vasiṣṭha-purāṇa, Vasiṣṭha-liṅga-purāṇa, Vasiṣṭha-śikṣā, Vasiṣṭha-śrāddha-kalpa, Vasiṣṭha-saṃhitā, Vasiṣṭha-homa-prakāra, a work on Vāstu-śāstra indicated by the Matsya-purāṇa 252 and lastly the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa or the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha, the work taken up for study here.

This list is quite an imposing one no doubt; but one is surprised to find that the list does not contain any work on philosophy, the special branch of knowledge in which the eminence of Vasiṣṭha has been recognised as almost unparalleled. True, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is there in the list but the claim of the work as it is, as being that of Vasiṣṭha, cannot be granted at all in the light of the discussions of the previous chapters. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa can only suggest that it is based on some 'Nucleus' a work on philosophy by Vasiṣṭha, a fact which is responsible for the name Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Is the presence of such a work of antiquity indicated ?

The reference to the Vasiṣṭha-kalpa in the list is in a way very significant. The *kalpa* is usually a complete *sūtra* set of a *caraṇa*.

That is whenever we have a Gṛhyasūtra, a Dharmasūtra and a Śrautasūtra, we speak of the set as complete. Such sets have been recovered in some *carāṇas*, as in the case of the Hiraṇyakeśins, Baudhāyanas and others. In fact, this fact is one of the main arguments of Dr. Bühler with which he has sought to prove the existence of the now not-available Mānava-dharma-sūtra. The Sūtra set is a priceless possession in the case of a *carāṇa* as it gives a somewhat complete picture of the life of a particular *carāṇa* to which it belongs. But when is the picture of the life of a *carāṇa* really complete or when should the set be regarded as really complete? The present set of three works refers to the law and religious practices as obtaining in the *carāṇa* but there is no reference to the philosophy of a *carāṇa*. In general these various *carāṇas* of the Vedas might have accepted the Brahman philosophy but then they must have had their own Sūtra work on the subject. That is, every set must have had its own Brahmasūtra. Further, these Sūtra works are more or less personal notes of master minds, authoritative in their own *carāṇas*. Whenever these master minds have something different to say they have their own works though the central authoritative Śrutis remain the same. In a similar manner master minds in the realm of philosophy must have had their own personal notes on the interpretation of the Upaniṣads or their own views in their own Brahmasūtras. This discussion leads us to a position according to which there must have existed many Brahmasūtras belonging to the various *carāṇas* or at least Brahmasūtras composed by master minds. The first of this possibility has already long been suggested by Dr. Belyalkar in his 'Basu Mallik Lectures' on Advaita Vedānta and in favour of the second supposition is to be cited the fact that in addition to the Brahmasūtras of Bādarāyaṇa, the existence of the Brahmasūtras of Jaimini is clearly indicated. There are definite reasons to think that there were also other authors of the Mīmāṃsā and the Brahmasūtras. For instance, Bādari, a thinker in Vedānta is referred to four times by Jaimini, III.1.3; VI.1.27; VIII.3.6; IX.2.33 and by Bādarāyaṇa I.2.30; III.1.11; IV.3.7; IV.4.10. This indicates that Bādari was the author of both the Mīmāṃsā and the Brahmasūtras as well. Jaimini himself is referred to eleven times by Bādarāyaṇa I.2.28, 31, 3.31, 4.18; III.2.40, 4.2, 18.40; IV.3.12, 4, 5, 11. This indicates that Jaimini did compose a Brahmasūtra and this is further supported by Sureśvara in this Naiṣkarmya-

siddhi. Kāśakṛtsna is another teacher who is referred to by Bādarāyaṇa in I.4.22 and his Mimāṃsā is referred to by Patañjali three times in his Mahābhāṣya.¹ Vidhusekhara Bhattacarya is of the view that this might have been a Brahmasūtra work. The Bādarāyaṇa-sūtras refer to Ātreya III.4.44, Āśmarathya I.2.29, 4.20, Kārṣṇājini III.1.9 and Auḍulomi I.4.21; III.4.45; IV.4.6. All these are authors of Brahmasūtras and yet their works are not before us. To these names Vidhusekhara Bhattacarya would add the names of Kaśyapa alluded to by Śāṇḍilya in his Bhaktisūtras 29 and of such sages as Asita Devala, Bhṛgu and Parāśara referred to in different works. Thus it is quite clear that there were many Brahmasūtras composed by different authors. Another point of interest is that Jaimini's work might have been a metrical one as is seen from the fact that some of his Sūtras read as a part of or a complete metrical line. Thus there were the Brahmasūtras in the *chandas* as well.

How is it that in this long list of the ancient sages who have been referred to as the authors of Brahmasūtras, the name of Vasiṣṭha does not appear at all? This is all the more surprising in view of the fact of Vasiṣṭha is recognised as a teacher or *guru* in the *guru-paramparā* of the Śāṅkara School. Did Vasiṣṭha not compose a Brahmasūtra?

The Bhagavadgītā XIII.4 reads as under

ऋषिभिर्बहुधा गीतं छन्दोभिः विविधैः पृथक् ।

ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्भिः विनिश्चितैः ॥

In his *bhāṣya* on this stanza Śāṅkara says in explaining the word 'ṛṣibhiḥ' as 'ṛṣibhiḥ Vasiṣṭhādibhiḥ'. It is very surprising that when there have been many Brahmasūtras before by celebrities like Bādarāyaṇa, Jaimini and others the commentator should have thought of Vasiṣṭha. It is absurd to suggest that the author refers to the Vasiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. It, again, cannot be said that the reference to Vasiṣṭha is made because of the R̥gvedic *mantras*; for the Vedic *mantras* are invocations and do not deal with Brahman which forms the subject-matter of the Upaniṣads and later literature based on them. Nor, can it be said that the reference is made to Vasiṣṭha by Śāṅkara because Vasiṣṭha is included in the *guru-paramparā* of his School. The order

1. Kielhorn, Mahābhāṣya, Vol. II, Poona, pp. 206, 249, 325.

is Vasiṣṭha, Śakti, Parāśara, Vyāsa, Śuka and so on. It is usual to start a discussion about the identity of Śaṅkara—and very natural and essential too—when any line from his *bhāṣya* is being used as evidence. The *Gītā-bhāṣya* is from the pen of the great Śaṅkara and even if it were not so, as Dr. Schrader thinks, the point is immaterial for our present purpose; for in either case it is clear that a commentator of the Advaita school, the great Śaṅkara or one holding not only his name but views, style and power of arguments, refers to a work of Vasiṣṭha dealing with Brahman. The evidence of an age-long tradition of at least eight hundred years, the evidence furnished by the similarities of style and views and finally the very decisive evidence of rival commentators like Rāmānuja, Bhāskara, Rāmakaṇṭha who do not spare any occasion of attacking the Mithyāvādin leave no doubt that the *Gītā-bhāṣya* is from the great Śaṅkara. In this case, since Śaṅkara is not in the habit of writing without point and a wrong reference is an impossibility with him, it is obvious that he is referring to some work by Vasiṣṭha on Brahman, traditionally known to him. The *Vāsiṣṭha-saṁhitā*, a work associated with Vasiṣṭha is not referred to here as it does not deal with Brahman and the V.R. is out of question.

Similarly Śaṅkara again refers to Vasiṣṭha's work in his *Śarīrakabhāṣya* in his comments on *anāvīṣkurvannanvayāt* III.4.50. Śaṅkara quotes two stanzas which hail from the *Vāsiṣṭha-saṁhitā*; one verse is VI.40, while the other one is not traced.

Again in his comments on the *Sanatsujātiya* I.15 and 31, Śaṅkara refers to two *ślokas* which he prefaces as *tathā ca āha bhagavān vasiṣṭhaḥ* and *tathā cāha vasiṣṭhaḥ*.

In his comments on the *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*, Śaṅkara again refers to a work by Vasiṣṭha as *tathā ca vāsiṣṭhe yogaśāstre*; this time the reference is more significant for it tells us that Vasiṣṭha's work referred to Yoga and recommended the same.

All this does not prove anything for the V.R. as it is and which has been the work for study of Dr. Atreya and Swami Bhumananda; and any effort to place the work as it is, before Śaṅkara, must fail in the light of the internal evidence of the work. If the quotations given in these contexts are to be traced in the V.R., it is because it is based on that original work of Vasiṣṭha which is not before us.

The Mahābhārata also refers to a philosophical dialogue between Vasiṣṭha and Brahmā. Vasiṣṭha in the V.R. does tell us that he remembers all the knowledge that Brahmā gave him. The Mahābhārata dialogue does not go further than the discussion of *Daiva* and *Pauruṣa*.

Bringing all these scattered threads and suggestions together the position is : Vasiṣṭha received knowledge from a Divine Deity which had in her turn revealed the Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad. Vasiṣṭha is regarded as a *guru* next to the Deity in the Advaita Vedānta School of Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara in his comments appears to suggest the existence of a work of Vasiṣṭha on Brahman which recommended Yoga. The present V.R. is obviously based on it for there is no doubt that this work closely follows the Śaṅkara Vedānta. Just as the Bhṛgu-saṁhitā was fathered on Manu, not simply because Manu's name was very great and was an expedient to win authority for the work, but because it was based on the Mānava-dharma-sūtra, a work of Manu, the existence of which was suggested by references to Manu in the Vedic literature and other writers, in a precisely similar manner the V.R. is based on a work of Vasiṣṭha which is no longer before us. It is possible to guess its teaching. It must have taught the *Vivarta* philosophy and recommended Yoga as well. Dr. Thibaut speaks of three schools of Vedānta as arising from the Upaniṣads, the monistic, the theistic and the qualified monistic. The list is to be completed by the addition of this fourth School of Vasiṣṭha teaching idealistic realism. This thread was taken up by Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkara and others. So the first phase or the nucleus of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha or the V.R. was this work of Vasiṣṭha. It is to be emphasised that it was no Rāmāyaṇa at all. It was not the instruction by Vasiṣṭha to Rāma or even in form a Vasiṣṭha-Rāma *saṁvāda*. It was the knowledge which was revealed to Vasiṣṭha. So when the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa repeatedly asserts that the text gives the knowledge that Vasiṣṭha received from Brahmā, it simply means that it is based on this work of Vasiṣṭha and is handing down that knowledge.

The second phase of the work was Vasiṣṭha-Rāma *saṁvāda*. This might have been done in imitation of the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra. The other alternative title might have been the Mokṣopāya which is repeatedly referred to in the work. The V.R. does preserve the traces of this phase. For it is significant that the V.R. calls itself as

Mokṣopāya more often than as Vasiṣṭha-Rāma *samvāda*. Thus in the *Vairāgya-prakaraṇa* we have

शृणु राजन्प्रवक्ष्यामि रामायणमखण्डितम् ।
श्रुत्वावधार्य यत्नेन जीवन्मुक्तो भविष्यसि ॥
वसिष्ठरामसंवादं मोक्षोपायकथां शुभाम् ।
ज्ञातस्वभावो राजेन्द्र वदामि श्रूयतां बुध ॥ I.1.52-53

and again

कथोपायान्विचार्यादौ मोक्षोपायानिमानथ ।
यो विचारयति प्राज्ञो न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥
अस्मिन् रामायणे रामकथोपायान्महाबलान् ।
एतांस्तु प्रथमं कृत्वा पुराहमरिमर्दन ॥
शिष्यायास्मि विनीताय भरद्वाजाय धीमते ।
एकाग्रो दत्तवांस्तस्मै मणिमब्धिरिवाश्रिते ॥
तत एते कथोपाया भरद्वाजेन धीमता ।
कस्मिंश्चिन्मेरुगहने ब्रह्मणोऽग्न उदाहृताः ॥
अथास्य तुष्टो भगवान्ब्रह्मा लोकपितामहः ।
वरं पुत्र गृहाणेति तमुवाच महाशयः ॥

भरद्वाज उवाच—भगवन्भूतभव्येश वरोऽयं मेऽद्य रोचते ।

येनेयं जनता दुःखान्मुच्यते तदुदाहर ॥

श्रीब्रह्मोवाच—गुरुं वात्मीकिमत्राशु प्रार्थयस्व प्रयत्नतः ।

तेनेदं यत्समारब्धं रामायणमनिन्दितम् ॥ I.2.3-9.

and then Bharadvāja to Vālmīki

एतदुक्तं भगवता यथा रामायणं कुरु ।

सर्वलोकहितार्थाय संसारार्णवतारकम् ॥ II.2.19.

after this much introduction in the *Vairāgya-prakaraṇa*, it is Vasiṣṭha who tells us that

स्मराम्यखण्डितं सर्वं संसारभ्रमशान्तये ।

निषधाद्रौ पुरा प्रोक्तं यज्ज्ञानं पद्मजन्मना ॥ II.2.27

and then Rāma requests him

कथयिष्यसि विस्तीर्णां भगवन्मोक्षसंहिताम् । II.3.2.

The author again tells us, this time through Vasiṣṭha

इहामुत्र च सिद्धचर्यं पुरुषार्थफलप्रदाम् ।

मोक्षोपायमयीं वक्ष्ये संहितां सारनिर्मिताम् ॥ II.10.4

सुखदुःखक्षयकरं महानन्दैककारणम् ।
 मोक्षोपायमिमं राम वक्ष्यमाणं मया शृणु ॥ II.10.7
 इमां मोक्षकथां श्रुत्वा सह सर्वेविवेकिभिः ।
 परं यास्यसि निर्दुःखं नाशो यत्र न विद्यते ॥ II.10.8.

Again through Vasiṣṭha

मोक्षोपायान्मिधानेयं संहिता सारसंमिता ।
 त्रिशद्वे च सहस्राणि ज्ञाता निर्वाणदायिनी ॥ II.17.6

and this is followed by the usual *grantha-māna*. The author speaks of similar works by others

मोक्षोपायकृता ग्रन्थकारेणान्येऽपि ये कृताः ।
 ग्रन्थास्तेष्विवमेवैका व्यवस्था बोध्यबोधने ॥ II.18.60.

Again Vasiṣṭha says to Rāma when he asks a question

मोक्षोपायस्य सिद्धान्तमसंप्राप्य न राघव ।
 श्रोतुं प्रश्नोत्तराण्येतान्यलं योग्यो भविष्यसि ॥ IV.57.9.

Again it is said in the VIb.139.8-9.

नान्यत्र प्रथते ज्ञानं मोक्षोपायविचारणात् ।
 ऋते तस्मात्प्रयत्नेन मोक्षोपायो विचार्यताम् ॥
 मोक्षोपायाहते नैतत्कुतश्चिदयतेऽन्यतः ॥ VIb.139.8, 9b
 वसिष्ठाख्यो मुनिश्चेष्टः कथयिष्यति संसदि ।
 मोक्षोपायकथां दिव्यां तां श्रुत्वा मुचिरं द्विज ॥ VIb.185.12b, 13a

and again the work closes as

सर्वे हि ते मोक्षकथाविचाराद्वाला ह्यवाला इव यान्त्यभेदम् ।
 मोक्षाभ्युपायान्सुमहानुभावान् ज्ञास्यन्ति ये तत्त्वविदां वरिष्ठाः ॥
 मोक्षाभ्युपायाख्यकथाप्रबन्धे । याते समाप्तिं सुधिया प्रयत्नात् ॥ VIb.215.9, 10, 15.

All these references leave no doubt that the more known name of the treatise was Mokṣopāya. This is corroborated by the colophon at the end of the chapters of the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and it runs as

इत्यार्षे श्रीवासिष्ठरामायणे मोक्षोपाये...सर्गः ।

OR

इत्यार्षे श्रीवासिष्ठमहारामायणे वाल्मीकीये
 मोक्षोपायेषु...प्रकरणे...सर्गः ॥

and lastly by the fact that the summary of the work by Abhinanda is called Mokṣopāya-sāra.

What was the teaching of this Mokṣopāya ? It has been suggested above that Vasiṣṭha's original work was to a very great extent based on the Upaniṣads and it emphasised the *abheda* of Brahman and the world and taught the *Vivarta* Doctrine; and that its theory of *mokṣa* was in accordance with this idealistic position. It accepted the gradation of experience as given in the Māṇḍūkya and taught that the *caturtha* or the *turiya* was the *mokṣa*. In brief, it had everything in it to make it the starting point of the Vedānta School of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara. The part of the present V.R. which agrees with the Upaniṣads is thus the evidence of its relation with this Nucleus. Such a work of Vasiṣṭha must have existed in the pre-Gauḍapāda period and in point of date could belong to the period of the Sūtras.

In the second phase, the Mokṣopāya, of which we are at present speaking, this Nucleus must have been taken up by thinkers under Buddhistic influence. The nature of the teaching of Vasiṣṭha's philosophy was such that it could be further developed along the Buddhistic lines. The similarity of the views of the V.R. and the Buddhistic Idealistic School is very remarkable so much so that Dr. Dasgupta remarks, "The views of the Vasiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa so much resemble those of the idealistic school of the Buddhists, that the whole work seems to be a Brahmanic modification of idealistic Buddhism." Writing of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara constitute other instances of the tendency to assimilate Buddhistic idealism and modify it on Brahmanic lines. Dr. Dasgupta further concludes "I am, therefore, inclined to think that the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa was probably a contemporary of Gauḍapāda or Śaṅkara about 800 A.D., or a century anterior to them." According to the argument made here, it is not the V.R. as we have it which is pre-Gauḍapāda but the Mokṣopāya which belongs to that period. This re-handling of the original work of Vasiṣṭha was done in Kāśmīra where already had appeared Nāgārjuna with his Buddhistic teachings. In Kāśmīra, we are told by Dr. Stein, "for centuries before Kalhaṇa's time Buddhism and the orthodox creeds had existed side by side peacefully. As far as the laity was concerned they had to a great extent amalgamated." It is in this atmosphere that Vasiṣṭha's work was remodelled as the

Mokṣopāya and hence the strong similarities with the idealistic schools of Buddhism and also its similarities with Gauḍapāda too. A critical study reveals that the V.R. has its similarities with Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara as well as differences too and these are important ones: as for instance, the problem of the real existence of the external objects where the V.R. leans to the Buddhistic view and also of the nature of Brahman where too the V.R. is more influenced by the Buddhistic view. The similarities are due to the fact that all the three are following the teachings of Vasiṣṭha. It is significant that the similarities between the V.R. and Gauḍapāda can be traced to earlier sources. In the phase we are discussing now, it is suggested that the similarities between the V.R. and the Kārikās of Gauḍapāda are due to the fact that they, on the Brahmanical side are based on the same sources, the Bṛhadāraṇyaka, the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, Vasiṣṭha's work on the Vedānta and on the Buddhistic side Nāgārjuna and others. Thus we have the famous

आदावन्ते च यन्नास्ति वर्तमानेऽपि तत्तथा ।

which is seen occurring in both the V.R. and Gauḍapāda. There is no question of the one borrowing from the other as the line hails from a still earlier source, the Mūlamādhyamakakārikās of Nāgārjuna and the Ācārāṅga-sūtra. In a similar manner, the doctrine of non-difference between the wakefulness and the dream condition which occurs in both is to be traced back to the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad IV.3-14. These common lines do not prove anything for the V.R. as against the Gauḍapāda-kārikās as Dr. Atreya has tried to prove. The fact is that both the works, the Mokṣopāya and the Kārikās, were written in an atmosphere almost saturated with Buddhistic philosophy and logic, and hence have these similarities. Gauḍapāda wrote in a land where the orthodox Brahmanical schools still dominated the minds and so he worked on a Śruti and the references to Buddha in his work are subtle. To Dr. Vidhusekhara Bhattacarya they are clear but even now scholars like R.D. Karmarkar are propounding alternative views. But the Mokṣopāya was written in a land-Kāśmīra where the local religion accepted Buddha as one of its gods and where the author had no reason to be subtle in his references to Buddha. Consequently, the Mokṣopāya glorified Buddha as the ideal man and as an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu. The same is the state of affairs as is to be seen in the V.R. From all this discussion it can now be

said that the Mokṣopāya represents the second phase of the development of the V.R. and the very strong Buddhistic influence is to be traced to this phase.

The third and the last phase of the work is the V.R. that is presented to us in the printed editions and which has been studied by Dr. Atreya and others. In this phase the work is Mahā or Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. This was completed some time after Mammaṭa yet before the Sūktimuktāvalī 1258 A.D. which quotes from the V.R. This third remodelling also took place in Kāśmīra. The author tells us

आत्मज्ञानप्रधानानामिदमेव महामते ।
शास्त्राणां परमं शास्त्रं महारामायणं शुभम् ॥
इतिहासोत्तमादस्माच्छ्रुताद्बोधः प्रवर्तते ।
सर्वेषामितिहासानामयं सार उदाहृतः ॥
यदिहास्ति तदग्यत्र यन्नेहास्ति न तत्कचित् ।
इमं समस्तविज्ञानशास्त्रकोशं विदुर्बुधाः ॥ III.8.8, 9, 12

and again

शास्त्रं सुबोधमेवेदं सालङ्कारविभूषितम् ।
काव्यं रसमयं चारु दृष्टान्तैः प्रतिपादितम् ॥ II.18.33

or again

महारामायणप्रायशास्त्रप्रेक्षणमात्रतः ।
एतदासाद्यते नित्यं किमेतावति दुष्करम् ॥ VIb.95.25

or again

अस्माद् ग्रन्थाहते ग्रन्थो नान्यः स्वात्मावबोधने ।
नूनमर्थकरो ग्राह्यस्तिलतैलार्थिनामिव ॥
आत्मज्ञानमिवं शास्त्रं प्रकाशयति दीपवत् ।
पितेव बोधयत्याशु कान्तेव रमयत्यलम् ॥ VIb.103.39, 40.

Now Vasiṣṭha tells us the purpose of this work as explained by Brahmā, who advised him to promulgate the *śāstra*

गच्छेदानीं महीपृष्ठे जम्बूद्वीपान्तरस्थितम् ।
साधो भरतवर्षं त्वं लोकानुग्रहेहेतुना ॥
तत्र क्रियाकाण्डपरास्त्वया पुत्र महाधिया ।
उपदेश्याः क्रियाकाण्डक्रमेण क्रमशालिना ॥
विरक्तचित्ताश्च तथा महाप्राज्ञा विचारिणः ।
उपदेश्यास्त्वया साधो ज्ञानेनानन्ददायिना ॥ II.10.40, 41, 42.

It will be seen that the name Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa is used only three or four times while the better known earlier name Mokṣopāya is used at least a dozen times. Again, in this last and final phase, the Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa is a *śāstra*, a *kāvya* and a *sāra* of the previous works, written almost in the manner of Vyāsa, the author of the Mahā-bhārata. It has already been shown as to how the Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa or the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is very closely related to the Epics and the Sanskrit literature in general and the claim of the author is more than justified. The effort is deliberate and the result is a success well-deserved. This final redaction also took place in Kāśmīra.

The land of Kāśmīra had the atmosphere referred to in the lines quoted above. From Nāgārjuna's time till the time of Śaṅkara, when he visited Kāśmīra, Buddhism was the popular religion but the other orthodox faiths also were living there peacefully side by side. And it is but natural that the two faiths should have influenced each other. "Thus there developed a religion which was neither purely Buddhistic nor purely Śaivite, but was a harmonious mixture of the meditative and philosophical aspect of the one and the ritualistic aspect of the other." But soon Kāśmīra developed its own philosophy the Trika or the Pratyabhijñā philosophy under the lead of Abhinavagupta and others. Śaṅkara's visit to Kāśmīra referred to above has the authority of the Śaṅkara-Digvijaya only. In view of the impact that this new thought has made on the great Śaṅkara too, the visit is not unlikely. Śaṅkara has used in Dakṣiṇāmūrti-stotra and his commentator Sureśvara has so explained all the important technical expressions in the same sense in which they are used in the Pratyabhijñā. Prof. Shivaprasada Bhattacharya has shown how the V.R. also stands related to the Trika system. Śaṅkara's advent brought the times of a synthesis of the Vedānta and Pratyabhijñā nearer and gave it an impetus. In Kāśmīra itself the Spanda School was coming into vogue and Vasugupta about 850 A.D. gave a systematic form to the philosophical ideas of the monistic Tantras in his Śiva-sūtras. This happened after Śaṅkara's visit. Kāśmīra was a land where already a ground for a synthesis always existed. For Dr. Stein observes in his Introduction to the Rājatarāṅgiṇī : "For centuries before Kalhaṇa's time Buddhism and the orthodox creeds had existed peacefully side by side in Kāśmīra. As far as the laity was concerned they had to a great extent amalgamated.

Kalhaṇa's own narrative from the point where it reaches historical ground gives ample proof of this. Of almost all royal and private individuals, who are credited with the foundation of Buddhist *stūpas* and *vihāras*, it is recorded that they, or at least members of their family, with equal zeal endowed also shrines of Śiva or Viṣṇu." (p. 9)

With the intellectual activity of the Pratyabhijñā and Trika writers in general literary activity combined with philosophical inquiry was on the increase and gained a very strong impetus. The Bhagavad-gītā was a text very popular with all these writers as could be seen from the fact of a number of commentaries on the text. In the field of literature and poetics, theories of *rasa*, *dhvani*, *nāṭya* had been propounded and these also were studied with a renewed vigour under the lead of Abhinava. In such an intellectually surcharged atmosphere the Mokṣopāya came in for its third remodelling. The Bhagavadgītā served the model while the remaining vast literature gave inspiration. The new element requiring to be synthesised was the Spanda conception, Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava ideas. It became the Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa and now being a Rāmāyaṇa only Vālmīki could be its author. In this phase all the portions of the texts which reflect these ideas must have gathered round the text. It has already been shown how the Bhagavad-gītā permeates the entire text. Coming at the end of a very great literary and philosophical era it takes practically a survey of the entire field before it and is really all-embracing in its character. When the author says that his work is the *sāra* of all the Itihāsas he is to be taken at his word. Another indication of this fact is that in its original form the nucleus, the work of Vasiṣṭha, or the Mokṣopāya could have hardly given any prominence or even admitted *karman* as a means of release. But *jñāna-karma* combination, *samuccaya*, was favoured in Kāśmīra and the V.R. also recommends the same. In brief, the V.R. is the result of a grand synthetic tendency and reflects the thought-movements in Kāśmīra. To understand the several different tendencies in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, knowledge of the historical background of Kāśmīra is necessary. In achieving the synthesis the original idealistic attitude was not given up but the new material was made to fit in the original frame. And thus came into existence the V.R. which was the Mokṣopāya containing the teachings of Vasiṣṭha but now given in a work of Vālmīki, the Rāmāyaṇa and so the colophon faithfully records all this when it runs as

इत्यार्षे वासिष्ठमहारामायणे वाल्मीकीये मोक्षोपाये सर्गः ।

Thus the entire development of the V.R. is spread over three phases

1. The Nucleus-Idealistic Upaniṣadic work of Vasiṣṭha
2. The Mokṣopāya-remodelling with Buddhist ideas
3. The Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa, Kāśmīrian synthesis

and as has been shown all this took place in Kāśmīra since the V.R. reflects the thought of Kāśmīra and knows the literature known to Kāśmīra.

CHAPTER VI

THE DATE OF THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

An attempt now can be made to formulate some opinion regarding the date of the V.R. The problem is by no means a simple one and is beset with all the difficulties that usually attend the date-problems of Sanskrit works and authors. Yet in the light of the discussions in the previous chapters it is possible to arrive at some conclusion, remembering of course that the inquiry and the conclusion regarding the problem of date is never final and is always open to revision in the light of new evidence when it becomes available. Whitney's famous observation 'All dates given in Indian literary history are pins set up to be bowled down again' remains true to this day.

Dr. Surendranatha Dasgupta does not accept the claim that the work is written by the author of the Rāmāyaṇa and assigns it to the 7th or 8th century A.D. He argues :

1. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa contains a *śloka* III.16.50, which is identical with Kālidāsa's Kumārasaṃbhava IV.39. It may almost unhesitatingly be assumed that the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa borrowed the verse from Kālidāsa who lived in the 5th century. The author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, therefore, flourished sometime after Kālidāsa and we should assume the interval between the two to be long enough to establish Kālidāsa's reputation as a poet.
2. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa seems to be a Brahmanic modification of idealistic Buddhism as can be obviously seen from the very striking similarities between the views of the two. The tendency to assimilate Buddhist idealism and modify it on Brahmanical lines can be seen in the writings of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara also; therefore the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa could have been their contemporary or an immediate follower in time.
3. Gauḍa Abhinanda of the ninth century wrote a summary of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa called 'Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha-Saṃkṣepa.' This would

conclusively point out that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa belongs to the 7th or the 8th century. 10th or 12th century as proposed by Prof. Shivaprasada Bhattacharya is hence untenable.

Dr. J. N. Farquhar observes 'The Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is one of many Sanskrit poems written in the 13th and 14th centuries to popularise a philosophy of a section. The system taught is the Advaita Vedānta, but there already appears in it that admixture of Sāṃkhya ideas which is still more prominent in Mādhava and Vijñānabhikṣu. The value of the Yoga also is emphasised. It may date from about 1300 A.D. or earlier.' Dr. Farquhar has not given any specific reasons or arguments in support.

Mr. P. C. Divanji in his paper submitted to the Seventh Oriental Conference, Baroda, expresses the opinion that the V.R. as it is, must have been composed either in the second or third, or if not in any of them, in the fourth-quarter of the 10th century. He argues :

1. When we speak of the date of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa we should try as far as possible to fix the text of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, the original, as it must have been composed. The references to the *saṃvādas* between Sūtīkṣṇa and Agastī, Kāruṇya and Agniveśya; Apsarā and a Devadūta; Vālmīki and Ariṣṭanemi; Vasiṣṭha and Rāma; Brahmā and Bhāradvāja; and Bhāradvāja and Vālmīki show that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has seven layers, and even if we cannot separate these seven layers, we could separate the two important layers, an original composition in the form of imaginary dialogues between Vasiṣṭha and Rāma and the subsequently added portions. The original composition had not six chapters and the dialogues between Sūtīkṣṇa-Agastī, Agniveśya-Kāruṇya, Suruchi-Devadūta and Vālmīki-Ariṣṭanemi occurring in the 1st *sarga* of the *Vairāgya-prakaraṇa* and in the 216th *sarga* of the *Nirvāṇa-prakaraṇa*. Similarly, some, at least if not all the prose passages and some of the *upākhyānas* like that of Līlā in the *Utpatti-prakaraṇa* and the whole matter of the *uttarārḍha* of the *Nirvāṇa-prakaraṇa* are later additions. Again attacks on Śaṃkara, glorification and geneology of the favoured doctrine, the discussion about the *jīvanmukta* and advocacy of the *anubhāvavāda* as against the *śāstravāda* are additions by the writer who gave the text its present form.

2. That these are later additions can be proved by a reference to the

following points; doctrinal and historical considerations :

(a) Śaṅkara does not refer to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in any of his numerous works. Moreover the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa discusses (i) whether by knowledge alone or by it accompanied by the performance of the rites *mokṣa* is attained, (ii) whether the Upaniṣadic Mahāvākyas themselves or the concentration on their meaning gave saving knowledge, (iii) whether the tradition supported the *jñānavāda* or the *samuccayavāda* and, lastly, (iv) the precise significance and the possibility of *jīvanmukti* and *videhamukta*. Mr. Divanji thinks that 'references to these points are irreconcilable with the theory of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa having been composed earlier than 788 A.D. For prior to this date, the Pūrva- and the Uttara-Mīmāṃsakas certainly had differences regarding the necessity of the *vaidika* and the *smārta karmas* after the desire for liberation had arisen, yet they never had any differences on the points mentioned. Further, it is clear that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is post-Śaṅkara since it ridicules his views, as the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* 29 is picked up by the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa for criticism. Whenever the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa shows a similarity or identity in phrase or idea with any earlier work like the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavadgītā, the Gauḍapāda-kārikās, the Vairāgya-śataka, the Meghadūta, etc., it is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which is the borrower and this according to Mr. Divanji is too apparent to require illustrations.

(b) A critical study of the historical material in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa also leads to the same conclusion. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa unmistakably refers to King Yaśaskaradeva of Kāśmīra who had his capital in the town of Adhiṣṭhana in Kāśmīra. A reference to Kalhaṇa's Chronicle of Kings of Kāśmīra by Sir. M. A. Stein reveals (Vol. I, pp. 234-244) that a Brahmin of that name ruled in Kāśmīra between 939-948 A.D. after the assassination of Suravarman II by Kamalavardhana. We are informed further in the same source (Ch. V.84, 85) that Pravarasena II (second-half of the sixth century) founded a new city on the site of modern Śrīnagara which was called Pravara-pura after the builder and the 'new city' as distinguished from the *purāṇa-adhiṣṭhāna*, the old site-city; as can be seen from the testimony of Hiuen Tsang, 631 A.D. Hiuen Tsang's term "the new city" must refer to this *nava-nūtaṇa-adhiṣṭhāna*. This identification becomes all the more convincing when we find that the V.R.

(IV.32.11-13) describe the town giving greater details; the beautiful town surrounded by the hills, the *Pradyumna-śikhara* standing in its midst and a lofty-king of the house on this peak etc. Rājatarāṅgiṇī III.357-62, while describing the town mentions its two prominent characteristics, its mansions reaching up to the clouds and the pleasure-hill in the centre. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa *adhiṣṭhāna* is this Nava-nūtana-adhiṣṭhāna or Pravarapura. Rājatarāṅgiṇī III.460 and VII.1616 mention a hill of the name Pradyumna and since Rājatarāṅgiṇī III.460 mentions the construction of two temples and a *maṭha* for the Pāsupata mendicants by King Raṇāditya of Kāśmīra and his wife, it is likely that by the time of our author there were many similar buildings as described by him in IV.32.11-13. Moreover, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa IV.32.18 mentions a Ratnāvalivihāra which is again found in the Rājatarāṅgiṇī III.476 as the name of a *vihāra* got constructed by Galuna, a minister of King Vikramāditya, son of the said Raṇāditya. The future tense which the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa uses only shows the prophetic vision of Vasiṣṭha. The familiarity which is seen in these descriptions of places and persons warrant the conclusion that the author lived at a time when Yaśaskara was the king of Kāśmīra and Nṛsiṃha was one of the ministers, that is in the first-half of the 10th century.

3. The assumption of an old nucleus of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is necessitated by the following facts :

(a) Vālmiki himself admits that he composed some Rāma story and handed the same to Bhāradvāja and subsequently at the request of Brahmā who heard these stories composed the present work. This only means that the present author knit together the stray stories on philosophical topics, the old nucleus, and arranged them into six chapters with some additions.

(b) The frequent repetitions in prose and verse can only be satisfactorily explained and in no other way except by this assumption.

(c) The several dialogues, one within the other, besides the main one of Rāma and Vasiṣṭha indicate that the work of Vālmiki passed through several hands till it came to the present author. Even the minister Nṛsiṃha, the narrator of story of Dama, Vyāla and Kaṭa must have had a hand.

(d) The division into six chapters is unscientific, the additions like

those of another Līlā and Devī, the description of another war etc. in the Līlā episode in the third chapter show a lack of sense of proportion and propriety which does not go well with the great poet as the author appears to be.

(e) The Anuśāsanaparvan refers to the existence of Vasiṣṭha-Brahmā dialogue (the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa II.2.27) as Itihāsa and supports such a conclusion.

(f) This original Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa though pre-Śaṅkara in age is not to be seen as referred to by Śaṅkara anywhere because the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa had a local circulation and if it originated in Kāśmīra or as Shivaprasada Bhattacharya says in Bengal or Eastern India, it is likely that it may not have come to his knowledge during his sojourn in that part of the country. Or it may be that he knew and yet he 'ignored' it in view of the facts that though there is no difference between his fundamental doctrine that there is only one reality and that propounded in this work, there is a difference between them as to certain ideals and as to certain details which are by no means unimportant and that it was a work in the Purāṇic or narrative style, not in the strictly philosophical or argumentative style.

(g) The Saṁkṣepa-Śārīraka II.182 pointedly refers to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and its author Sarvajñātman lived about 900 A.D. Yet on account of the introduction of the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa I.1.55-56 it may be that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa was not in its present form.

(h) Gauḍa Abhinanda of Kāśmīra, in the middle of the 9th century according to Konow, wrote Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha-Saṁkṣepa, an abridgement of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in its present form. But the date proposed by Konow is dependent on very flimsy grounds. Aufrecht (Catalogus Catalogorum, p.502) has a statement that Sūktimuktāvali mentions Rājaśekhara, the author of Karpūramañjarī, as a contemporary poet of Vasukalpa and Abhinanda. Konow bases his assumption on this statement but Mr. Divanji has found Aufrecht who depends on information given by several uncritical persons as not very reliable as in the case of Madhusūdana Saraswati and Śaṅkara's works. Secondly, on the authority of Bühler, Konow identifies two Abhinandas even though he is aware of their distinctness and the fact that the names of

their fathers differ. Thirdly, the date of Abhinanda is arrived at by the following calculation : he is said to be the great-great grandson of an unnamed man who lived in the time of Mukṭāpīḍa Lalitāditya who is believed to have ascended the throne of Kāśmīra 'not before 724' and from that it is inferred that Abhinanda must have lived in the middle of the 9th century i.e. about 850. Thus the date of Abhinanda being uncertain, any argument based on it is not very convincing. The terminus ad quem need not be the 12th century as Prof. Bhattacharya thinks. Its familiarity with the Bhāgavatapurāṇa is no serious objection for according to Mr. B. N. Krisnamurti Sarma the Purāṇa was well known in the 10th century and goes back to the 5th century if not earlier. From all this Mr. Divanji concludes that the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has been composed in the second, third or if not in any of them in the fourth-quarter of the 10th century.

Prof. Shivaprasada Bhattacharya has discussed the problem of the date of the V.R. in his paper to the Third Oriental Conference and his views are :

1. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is Buddhistic in essence and inception. The Buddhistic element of which the work is so full may be due to the fact that the author was a follower of Asaṃga whose name is often introduced in the work. If this were correct then the author who is the follower of Asaṃga may belong to the 6th century A.D.
2. However, there are other considerations regarding the outer shell of the work with its occasional references which take us much further. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa with its *kāvya*-style paraphernalia, *cūrṇikā*-prose portions, elaborate descriptions, ideas, images and allegories and their monotonous repetitions, the figures of speech, surrender of the story and theme to the rhetorical effect and conceits is clearly a specimen of later exuberant but extravagant *kāvya* style. There are references to, parallelisms of and often verbatim quotations from Kālidāsa, Bhāravi, Bāṇa, Bhavabhūti and Māgha (Vairāgya 6.17-23, 7.20-21, 16.5-21, 17-51; Utpatti. 16.16; and Nirvāṇa 14-17). These are not interpolations. Further the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa shows traces of the complexity of Hindu ideals and modes of worship after the Purāṇic fashion, it has the courage and frankness to cry them down in no uncertain terms (Vairāgya 25-32, 40-11; 29.120-131). In spite of the fact that it is in *kāvya* style it is seldom found quoted in any

of the mediæval Alambkāra texts or native traditional anthologies and this shows that it was not known for long and was studied at a comparatively later date. This points to a period later than the 6th century.

3. In its philosophy and inner essence the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa reflects the tendencies of a particular age and may be even of a particular local environment. Like the Bhagavadgītā, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa also tries to make a synthesis of the views of the Sāṃkhya and Yoga and other schools. Considering all the things that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has brought together, this nature of the ideal and temperament held up for realisation could not be thought of in Buddhist India before the days of the Pāla kings of Bengal, especially for a Hindu writer treating essentially a Hinduite theme and so it would be bold to say that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa was composed earlier than the 9th century A.D.

4. This conclusion is supported by other considerations as well. In the fight between the two Western Kings, the Pārasikas and the Tāmrayavanas take part (Utpatti. 37.20-24). The Tāmrayavanas are possibly the people of Afghanistan who about the tenth century onwards came in hoards to western India for plunder and ravage. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa only mentions their attacks or part in the war but not any overthrow of the Indian princes or their complete conquest of any part of India. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa does not refer at all to Rāmānuja or to the views of his school and the fact that it refers to the Vedānta philosophy as Vedāntins or Vedāntavādins and its references to the views of this school would take us to a time not earlier than that of the great Śaṅkara. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa further knows the Purāṇas to be *bahupāthas* (Nirvāṇa. 22.20-27) and also has an indirect hint that the author might have been familiar with the Bhāgavata-purāṇa and its hard and fast line of demarcation between *aṃśakalā* and *bhagavattva* of Viṣṇu, the Supreme Being. If we accept the conclusions of Pargiter regarding the age and the compilations of the Purāṇas as substantially true, this would point 10th century as the date of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa speaks of many Vyāsas and Vālmīkis and the view prevailed in Bengal since the 11th century, the times of King Ballālasena. From Vairāgya. 3.37-38; Utpatti. 36, 37; Mumu. 18; Sthiti. 62.8, 11, 12, it appears that the author is at home in treating the

customs and the culture of the Easterners, the picture of Buddhistic ideals, superinducing of alien doctrines on national life; hence it possibly hails from a land where these conditions prevailed. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has popularity like the Bhagavadgītā in Bengal; its MSs. are common in that province like those of the Rāmāyaṇa, the Mahābhārata and the Bhāgavata-purāṇa and Vaiṣṇava writers since Caitanyadeva quote it as authority. Later on Abhinanda Tarkavāgīśa Gauṇamaṇḍalam Laikārapaṇḍita Samadviveka etc., a North Bengal writer composed a summary in 92 verses, the Laghu-Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha or Mokṣopāyaśāra and this again was commented on by Mahīdhara in 1598 A.D. This Abhinanda is different from the famous Gauḍa Abhinanda of Kāśmīra who summarised the Kādambarī. Ānanda-bodha Saraswati of the 17th century, in the South, was according to himself the first to comment on the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa—*ananyapūrvavyākhyātāṁ granthāṁ me vyavikīrṣataḥ*, etc. The geography and the topography of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa are of a later date than those of the Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa and the Brahma-Saṁhitā. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa refers to one Sindhurāja (Utpatti. 34, 48) and there is one famous Sindhurāja in history, the father of King Bhoja of Malwa. Bhoja succeeded him in 1010 A.D., the year in which Mahamūda of Gazanī took Multan. Vincent Smith describes Bhoja's fights with neighbouring powers including one of the Mohammedan armies of Mahamūda. It would, however, be bold to say that this Sindhurāja is the King described in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa episode. So all this points to the 10th to 12th century as the probable date of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and Eastern India, Bengal, as its place of inception.

Dr. B. L. Atreya has discussed this problem of the date in the second chapter of his book. He is inclined to place the V.R. in a much earlier pre-Śaṁkara period and his arguments are as under :

1. 10th and 12th century as the probable date of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa cannot be accepted because Vidyāraṇya of the first half of the 14th century regards it as an authority, quotes very freely from it in his Pañcadaśī and his Jīvanmuktiviveka is mainly based on the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as the 253 quotations would prove. Vijñānabhikṣu is not the first writer then to refer to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Further the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa of about 32,000 ślokaś was summarised into a Laghu-Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha or the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha-sāra of 6,000

*śloka*s by Abhinanda, a Gauḍa Brāhmaṇa of Kaśmīra in the middle of the 9th century. Konow, Keith, Winternitz, all seem to accept this fact. This would conclusively prove that all the dates proposed after the 9th century cannot be accepted.

2. Winternitz thinks the author to be a contemporary of the great Śaṃkara. This is not possible as it is summarised in the middle of the 9th century. For a work of the size of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to be composed, to become well-known and authoritative to deserve a summarising, the time allowed by Winternitz, by taking the author as a contemporary of Śaṃkara, three quarters of a century is hardly sufficient. It must be a pre-Śaṃkara work.

3. Prof. Bhattacharya's contention that the occurrence of the term Vedāntins or the Vedāntavādins in the sense of the Vedānta school would take us to the time not earlier than that of Śaṃkara has really nothing convincing in it. The term Vedānta in the sense of the Upaniṣads is very old¹ and Gauḍapāda who definitely is pre-Śaṃkara has indications to prove the previous existence of a school of thinkers propounding the Vedānta philosophy. On the strength of the use of these words the work cannot become post-Śaṃkara.

4. Since the peculiar Śaṃkara terminology is completely absent in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa it must belong to a pre-Śaṃkara period. The many similarities between Śaṃkara and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa only prove that Śaṃkara was to a very great extent influenced by the text and lifted from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

5. Gauḍapāda is pre-Śaṃkara and the Māṇḍūkya-kārikās also reveal the influence of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa on them. The parallels in thought and expression between the two are due to the fact that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is prior to the Kārikās and Gauḍapāda lifted from it.

6. Prof. Bhattacharya thinks of the times of the Pāla kings of Bengal when such conditions prevailed in India, as suitable for such ideal and also for a realisation of the same. But this is not necessary, for Bāṇa, in his Harṣacarita, in the description of Divākaramiśra, noted by Carpenter² does show that the first half of the 7th century also was

1. Muṇḍaka III.2.6; Śvetāśvatara 6.22

2. Theism in Medieval India, pp. 111-12.

a similar period of harmony and tolerance.

7. Prof. Dasagupta's view that no Hindu writer before Gauḍapāda attempted to give an exposition of the monistic doctrine, apart from the Upaniṣads, either by writing a commentary or by writing an independent work as Śaṅkara and Gauḍapāda did respectively, is wrong. Bhavabhūti coming according to Bhandarkar at the end of the 7th century, before the great Śaṅkara, knows the term *Vivarta* and the Illusion theory as shown by III.47; VI.6 of his *Uttararāmacarita*. The term *vivarta* does not occur in the Upaniṣads, the Bhagvadgītā and even in Gauḍapāda. The views alluded to by Bhavabhūti in his simile frequently occur in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. A careful comparison of Bhavabhūti and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa shows that Bhavabhūti is the borrower and we have no hesitation in thinking that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa existed in the times of Bhavabhūti, if not earlier.

8. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is earlier than even Bhartṛhari, the author of the *Vairāgyaśataka* and the *Vākyapadiya*, as the fact that Bhartṛhari imitates the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in many places shows. Bhartṛhari's date is 650 A.D. and hence the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa existed at the commencement of the 7th century.

9. The first chapter of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which is more or less a traditional beginning in the Purāṇic fashion clearly shows that the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is not written by Vālmiki. If there existed any composition of Vālmiki, the nucleus of the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, it is very difficult to say what its doctrines might have really been in their unadulterated form. A critical comparison of the first chapter of the *Anuśāsanaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* and the 10th *sarga* of the second *prakaraṇa* of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa shows remarkable agreement and shows that even before the *Mahābhārata* composition there existed a work containing the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha which he learnt from Brahmā. The doctrine of Superiority of Effort over Fate is almost the same. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa (II.5-9), and the *Mahābhārata* (Anu.I.1.2), refer to the old story of Brahmā and Vasiṣṭha. This might have formed the nucleus of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. The nucleus is thus pre-epic.

10. The present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is a fine synthesis of all that was best in the Upaniṣads, Sāṃkhya and Mahāyāna Buddhism. The

author has knowledge of Buddhism with all its schools, Mādhyamika, Vijñānavāda, for these are directly mentioned and their doctrines like Idealism, Nihilism, Yogabhūmikās are 'irremovably incorporated' here. The author was acquainted with the Tathatā philosophy of Aśvaghōṣa, Śūnyavāda of Nāgārjuna, Vijñānavāda of Asaṅga and Vasubandhu and therefore he cannot be placed earlier than these thinkers. Nāgārjuna's date is latter half of the 2nd century and that of Vasubandhu is between 420-500 A.D. The author of the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, therefore, could not have lived earlier than the close of the 5th century A.D. Another important fact pointing to the same conclusion is the relation of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and Kālidāsa. VIb.119.2-5 in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is a nice summary of the Meghadūta. It is now accepted that Kālidāsa belongs to the early part of the 5th century A.D. The author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, therefore, cannot be placed before the middle of the 5th century. He lived at the time of the downfall of the glorious reign of the Gupta kings. The philosophy and the description of the wars and the battles in the III and the VI books, the war between Vidūratha and Sindhu, the invasions from all quarters on the kingdom of Vipāścīt and the mention of the Hūṇas justify this conclusion. Thus the author of the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is to be placed before Bhartṛhari and after Kālidāsa. The geography, topography and history can help us in fixing an exact date of this work. We have mainly considered its philosophical doctrine.

Dr. V. Raghavan takes up the discussion of this very problem in his article on the date of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in the *Journal of Oriental Research* (Vol. XIII, part ii, pp.110-128). His arguments are as under :

1. The question of the date of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is inseparably connected with the question of the interpolations and additions, but unlike Mr. Divanji who in his articles on the same subject (Proceedings of the 7th Oriental Conference, Baroda, pp.15-30; The Poona Orientalist, III.1, pp.29-44; The New Indian Antiquary, I.12, pp.697-715) goes into the questions of the additions to the text of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Dr. Atreya studies the question only on the basis of the Nirṇaya-Sāgara edition in two volumes. Mr. Divanji thinks that the date of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is the 2nd quarter of the 10th century.

Dr. Atreya thinks that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is to be placed between Kālidāsa and Bhartṛhari and that the work is earlier than Gauḍapāda, Bhartṛhari, Śaṃkara and Sureśvara whom it has influenced.

2. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is undoubtedly a *kāvya* and it describes itself in this manner in II.11.33. It now echoes one master, now works into its verse a figure or a description from some poem or a drama and now uses wholesale a verse from other's writings. A thorough examination of this aspect of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa helps us to a great extent in the task of arriving at an earlier limit to the date of the work. Dr. Atreya's investigation is meagre and tainted by his assumptions. To the parallels noted by Dr. Atreya, Dr. Raghavan has to add many more. Thus he points out parallel passages as well as those where influence can be suspected from Kālidāsa, Bhāravi (550 A.D.), Mātṛgupta (6th century), Bāṇa (7th century), Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa (7th century second-half), Bhartṛhari (651 A.D.), Kumārila (660 A.D.), Maṇḍana (695 A.D.), Bhavābhūti (8th century first-half), Śaṃkara, Ānandavārdhana (884 A.D.), Rājaśekhara (920 A.D.), Abhinanda (900 A.D.) and everywhere comes to the conclusion that it is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which is the borrower. He also considers the evidence given by the Gītā text used by the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and on finding that it is a mixture of the Kāśmīra and the Vulgate decides that the date of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa could only be the times after the 10th century. Further he points out that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa speaks of the invasions of the Eastern regions by the kings of Karṇāṭa which event took place in 1023 A.D. as has been pointed out by Mm. Haraprasada Sastri and so the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa must be subsequent to this period. Again he points out that the usual Abhinanda argument is weak in itself and that the argument of Mr. Divanji based on the evidence of Sarvajñātman is a mistake and remarks that these need not make us bring the earlier limit of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa before the 10th century. The latest possible date according to him is determined by the fact that the Sūktimuktāvali (1258 A.D.) quotes from the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. From all this, Dr. Raghavan comes to the conclusion that 'the date of the text of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as we have it in the Nirṇaya Sāgara Press edition in two volumes must be between the 11th and the middle of the 13th century.'

All this discussion will reveal to us how all possible positions.

have been taken by all these scholars; thus Dr. Atreya takes the text to be a pre-Śaṅkara work; Dr. Dasgupta takes it to be by one a contemporary of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara or a century anterior; Prof. Bhattacharya places it somewhere between 10th and 12th century; Mr. Divanji places it in the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th quarter of the 10th century; Dr. Raghavan places it between 11th and 13th and finally we have Dr. Farquhar placing it in the 14th century. Which of these deserves acceptance ?

In fact, the argument for the date of the work has been developed all through the preceding chapters. In the light of the discussions it is obvious that the view held by Dr. Atreya is clearly untenable. Moreover it would be too much to say that the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has any considerable antiquity. There is only one thing in Dr. Atreya's discussion that is worth consideration and that is the possibility of the nucleus of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa belonging to an earlier period. But throughout his discussion he has the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa before him.

Then we have the views of Dr. Dasgupta and Mr. Divanji and it is clear that Dr. Dasgupta's view that the work could be written by an author either contemporary of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara or a century anterior to them cannot be accepted in view of the fact that the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa shows clear evidence of the influence of the writers belonging to later centuries. Dr. Dasgupta is influenced by the usual Abhinanda argument but, as Mr. Divanji has shown, this argument has no force in it on account of the confusion regarding Abhinandas and hence his attempt to fix the date of the work as anything before the 9th century has no force in it and is not convincing. Further, Dr. Dasgupta does not appear to take into consideration any possibility of the evolution of the text through centuries.

Mr. Divanji has certainly made improvements over the scholars mentioned and he has suggested the possibility of the evolution of the text by additions and accretions and has tried in his own way to point out as to what could be regarded as the original and later. He has in a convincing manner got over the difficulty of the Abhinanda argument and pushed the date onwards by a century or so. Mr. Divanji mentions the seven layers in the text on account of the seven dialogues that are referred to in the introduction but this does not appear to be

convincing. Are these seven layers to be understood in some chronological order, and if so, then what could be the possible order? Further, do these seven layers belonging to different times imply doctrinal differences as well, and if so, what were these? All these are rather very important questions and these are neither solved nor has any clue been offered for their solution. Mr. Divanji has made very valuable contribution to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa scholarship by pushing the date beyond the 9th century and also by pointing out the evidence of Sarvajñātman that the nucleus is to be placed earlier than the Saṃkṣepa-sārīraka. But his suggestion that Śaṃkara might have ignored a work of this type makes no appeal; for it is impossible that the great Śaṃkara could ignore any important work. Moreover Swami Bhumananda has shown that Śaṃkara, the great, or a commentator of his school with the very name, shows that a work by Vasiṣṭha did exist. The great Śaṃkara could neglect the work only on account of its very prominent Buddhistic philosophy and tendencies.

Swami Bhumananda's attempts to help Dr. Atreya also are equally unsatisfactory. At best the existence of a nucleus of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is proved; but nothing is established for our Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

Next to Mr. Divanji's contribution to the problem, the contribution of Prof. Bhattacharya is extremely valuable. He has pointed out the Buddhistic and the Trika elements in the work and thus has on that count placed the work in 10th to 12th century, a conclusion which can be accepted with little modifications. But the home of the work as suggested by him cannot be accepted. It is clear that the work was produced in Kāśmīra inasmuch as it knows the literature current in that province and also the peculiar philosophy that was developed there. Kāśmīra has been referred to in the work in many places (IV.29.27; 31.15; 32.11; V.93.42), and as Mr. Divanji has shown, the author is familiar with the history as well as the topography of Kāśmīra and so all things put together clearly point out that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is a product of Kāśmīra. Stein in his introduction to the Rājatarāṅginī has shown as to how tolerance and the simultaneous existence of opposing creeds was a special feature of Kāśmīrian life since the days of Nāgārjuna, and so it is not necessary to think of Bengal of the Pāla kings as Prof. Bhattacharya thinks.

Dr. Raghavan's contribution too is immensely significant and his

efforts to find the influence of the various poets on the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has fruitful results. Again his effort to fix the date in the light of the Gītā text is ingenious and convincing too.

Strictly speaking, the problem of the date of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is just like the problem of the date of the Epics, the Mahābhārata in particular—a text with later additions and accretions to a nucleus. Like the great Epic, this Epic of Vedānta also has suffered from successive revisions. Therefore when we speak of the date we have to be precise about the phase we are referring to. It has been shown that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa with the Trika elements represents the last and the final phase of the text while the Buddhistic element represents the second phase. The work was in this phase known as the Mokṣopāya. The nucleus of the work was the work of Vasiṣṭha now no longer before us, Upaniṣadic in essence but capable of being developed on Buddhistic Idealistic lines. Remembering these three phases, the Upaniṣadic, the Buddhistic and the Trika, different dates have naturally to be assigned for these successive phases. The work has not seven layers as Mr. Divanji has suggested, but it must have passed through the three revisions, and at each revision it gathered some additional material in thought and bulk. In its final phase now it is not easy to separate the material. The work as it is may be very big but it has a certain uniformity of plan and style as well. Mr. Divanji thinks that the division into six chapters is crude and unscientific but one does not feel it so. For the kernel deals with Utpatti, Sthiti and Upaśama, the very fundamental *avasthātraya* of the Universe and then the first deals with *vairāgya* as the necessary pre-requisite of the philosophical inquiry and the last naturally deals with the *nirvāṇa*. It is also necessary that there should be a discussion of the released man and hence the second deals with *mumukṣuvyavahāra*. There is a certain method in this vastness. In fact the very systematic examination of all the evils of life as attempted in the *Vairāgya prakaraṇa* itself is sufficient evidence for the author's attempt to write in a systematic manner and according to some plan.

Thus it is necessary to think of three periods in and for the development of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa from its nucleus to its present form as presented in the Nirṇaya Sāgara edition in two volumes. The original work of Vasiṣṭha goes back to the Sūtra period and the second phase namely the Mokṣopāya would belong to the period after

Nāgārjuna but before Śaṅkara; thus its date would be somewhere between the 3rd and the 7th century but later than the composition of the Laṅkāvatārasūtra which the author of the Mokṣopāya tried to imitate. It may be that the author of the Mokṣopāya, the person responsible for the second revision was a follower of Asaṅga as Prof. Bhattacharya has suggested. The third and the last phase is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and this was done by a writer of the Trika school. This being carried out, the Mokṣopāya was developed into the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa some time after the 10th or 12th century as has been shown by all these scholars. But can any attempt be made to fix it more precisely ?

It has been shown that the author of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa knew the Kāvya prakāśa of Maṃmaṭa. The date of Maṃmaṭa lies in the latter half of the 11th century. This then is the earliest possible date for the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Is there any clue for the latest possible date ? Dr. Raghavan refers to the fact of the text being quoted by the Sūktimuktāvalī (1258 A.D.) and this would determine this limit. More convincing evidence corroborating this conclusion of Dr. Raghavan is available from the celebrated Marathi poet, Jñāneśvara. He wrote his immortal and epoch-making Jñāneśvarī in the Śalivāhana Śaka 1212 that is 1280 A.D. His date is definitely known to be 1275-1296 A.D. Jñāneśvara is greatly influenced by the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Tradition goes that he had written one Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha but it is not now available. But the work Amṛtānubhava, which is clearly his, shows definite traces of the influence of this work. The famous Jñāneśvarī also reveals the same fact. Dr. S. D. Pendse in his work Śrī Jñāneśvarāṇce Tattvajñāna has devoted one full chapter to trace and evaluate this influence (pp. 315-331; ch. VIII) and this will clearly reveal that this very great poet was deeply under the spell of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, for he has taken from it not only philosophical ideas and expressions but also its highly poetical style for philosophical matter. The Bālaka-ākhyāyikā in III.101 inspired Jñāneśvara to write his famous Abhaṅga *kātyācyā aṇṇvara vastī tīna gāva* etc. very popular in Marathi philosophical poetry. All things put together, there can be no doubt that this great bard of Marathi language regarded the work with regard and derived inspiration from it. In fact the Marathi metaphysical poetry is under a deep influence of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as can be seen from the fact that the work is quoted by writers like Vāmana Paṇḍita and Rāmadāsa and it was commented

upon by or abridged by writers like Raṅganātha, Vyankaṭa and others.

From this it will appear that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is likely to have been given its present form sometime between 1150 and 1250 A.D. Allowing a period of 50 years for the work to get currency, popularity and authority, the limit may be brought down to 1200 A.D.

From this it will appear that Dr. Farquhar's view that it belongs to 13th or 14th century also cannot be accepted. In this manner, this great Epic of the Advaita Vedānta or Indian philosophy, like the Epics of the Bards, got its present shape by revisions with definite tendencies and through three stages; the original work of Vasiṣṭha, whence it derives its name; the Mokṣopāya; and the Vāsiṣṭha or the Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa, an Epic with 32,000 verses.

CHAPTER VII

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE VĀSIṢṬHA RĀMĀYAṆA

The philosophy of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has been critically studied by Dr. Atreya and Dr. Dasgupta. Here an attempt is made to give a summary of the views of the V.R. on important topics which go to make up its philosophy.

BRAHMAN

The V.R. has retained the Upaniṣadic term Brahman to denote the highest reality. It is also sometimes called as the *param*, *satya*, etc. It has already been shown as to how much the V.R. depends on the Upaniṣads and the earlier philosophical literature and therefore it is not at all surprising if it retains the very popular terms in its own thought.

III. Canto 5 discusses the nature of God who is the first cause—*mūlakāraṇa*—of the world. Even though it is accepted that the mind is the cause of this illusory universe, the question remains regarding the cause of the mind. The *ātman* is then described as the *mūlakāraṇa*. This *ātman* is eternal, all powerful, the Highest Lord, the *puruṣa* of the Sāṃkhyas, the Brahman of the Vedāntins, the *vijñāna* of the Vijñānavādins and the *śūnya* of the Śūnyavādins. From Him, God originates like rays from the sun and the various worlds like the bubbles on the ocean. To Him the universes proceed like the waters to the ocean, He illumines everything, He transcends everything and even though producing so many universes He really produces nothing but always remains pure, of the essence of eternal *saṃvid*. Words fail to describe Him but He is understood by the released. This *ātman* is the *mūlakāraṇa*, the first cause of everything (4-10, 23). III. Canto 9 discusses the nature of the *parama kāraṇa* in precisely very similar terms. The Universe is an illusion created and perceived by ignorance. The Ultimate Reality is only *cit*, endless, eternal and all-auspicious. It has no cause but the worlds are its effects like the waves on waters.

By its *cit* all the worlds shine. From it the mirages proceed. Movement and non-movement, *spanda* and *aspana* are its eternal and pure natures and these result respectively in the production and the destruction of the universes. He pervades the entire universe, though bodiless. He has an all-pervading form with a thousand hands and eyes. He is the object of the sense-knowledge and he is the knower again. This original cause is Unborn, Ageless, Beginningless, Eternal, Brahman, Enduring, Auspicious, Pure, Irresistible, Sacred and Blameless, beyond thought and imagination and unaffected by these, the Cause of all the causes as designated by *tat* and the final knowing Consciousness as designated by *tvam* (50, 55, 59, 65, 74, 76). The 10th canto discusses the fact that it is the Brahman again that remains unaffected and intact even after the Destruction. It is *cinmātra*, pure, peaceful. Just as when water is at rest then there are, as well as are not, the waves in it, in a similar manner in the Brahman the universes rest. The fact is that nothing comes out of this Highest and nothing is therefore destroyed. At all times only the pure and the highest Brahman is existing. Its own experience is its light. From the full, the full has come out but even then it has remained full. The chilly is pungent but only when there is somebody to taste it. In a similar manner, the worlds get an existence when there is a perceiver. It, the Highest Reality, is subtle, minute, pure, beyond the *vāsanās*, senses, and intelligence. It is beyond the mind and all the various products and functions of the mind. In fact when the mind is itself at rest and destroyed then it is the pure Brahman that shines. Verses 38 to 54 describe the Brahman as beyond everything and being very subtle the cause of everything in terms that remind one of the Upaniṣads and Buddhistic ideology. The use of the term *śūnya* is striking. Canto 11 discussing the Highest Reality again affirms in 32 that it is the *ātman* that is the only reality and that duality has no existence. When the *dr̥śya* exists then the Seer comes into existence and when the Seer exists then the Seen comes into existence. By the existence of the one or either, both are bound but by the non-existence of one or either both become free and released. The universe does not exist as it has no cause; hence the question of its destruction does not arise. The Gauḍapādiya note is too obvious to escape notice (4, 13, 18, 32). The similes of the *vandhyāputra* and *śvapna* are also freely used. Thus the falsity of the creation and the reality of the

ātman is reaffirmed. Canto 14 is devoted to a discussion of the Brahman.

The *ajātivāda*, teaching that nothing has been produced is here taught in the manner of Gauḍapāda. The *ātman* itself is all this; and again all this has no existence and therefore he is nothing. The *jīva* also has no existence whatsoever and the only reality existing is the Brahman, pure, *cinmātra* and all-pervading. The perception of the *jīva* and the world is just darkness of the mind which disappears as the light of knowledge begins to illumine and shine in the mind. The Brahman, only being all-powerful, partless, is able to put forth whatever it wishes and then the duality is created. When the Brahman conceives a desire duality is created; then the various powers are given a scope for their display and thus the *jīva* comes into existence. The *caitanya* part curiously enough assumes the appearance of egoism and in this manner it is by an idea that the universe has been set going. There is no diversity, and it is the *spanda*, movement of the *cit* that assumes the form of the *jīva* and the world that is experienced by it. The Brahman is beyond destruction and beyond any change whatsoever. How can then any real production take place? The various words like the part and the whole are without and meaning as they are as unreal as the horn of the hare. Thus the world being false it is the Brahman that alone, and only one, is the ultimate reality.

III. Canto 20 gives the philosophic instruction given by the Goddess to Līlā. Here also it is affirmed that the *cit* alone is the reality and in this very vast *cit* are so many universes perceived and created, all of them having no reality whatsoever. The world exists in its appearance only and this appearance or its existence is only for a moment, *kṣaṇakalpa*. There is no difference between the waves and the water, in a similar manner the universe is not produced and for that reason is not destroyed too. In its own form it has no existence and what appears is the *cit* only. The universes and ages pass off in a single minute as all these are false and ideal perceptions by the mind in the *cit*. This instruction is described as the *parama-artha-varṇana*.

III. Canto 67 proceeds to give instruction regarding the Highest Truth. The Brahman which is the highest truth and the ultimate cause of the universe is of the nature of *cit* capable of movement and rest, *spanda* and *aspaṇḍa*. All the world is Brahman only of homogeneous entity. The *jīvātmā* comes into existence by a mere chance. Nothing is produc-

ed here, nothing is destroyed. It is the Brahman that displays itself in the form of the city of the *gandharvas*, in the form of the world (66). In the prose text that concludes the chapter, the usual Vedānta similes of the *jala-taraṅga*, *raju-sarpa*, *hema-kaṭaka* are used and the Brahman is described in the Upaniṣadic manner.

III. Canto 81 again touches the topic of the instruction regarding the Highest. It is emphatically declared that the world is in the Brahman as the tree remains in the seed (86). The perception of the duality leads to activity and hence results in misery for the soul. It is the *draṣṭṛ* who is responsible for the *drśya*. Reminding one of Gauḍapāda and Bādarāyaṇa, the analogy of the father and the son or of the *bhogyā* and the *bhoktṛ* is utilised to prove the relative character of the two (63-66). III. Canto 94, establishes that from the Brahman everything proceeds. Just as drops, waves, etc. do arise from water, the mirage from the Sun, the moonlight from the Moon, in a similar manner from Brahman all things proceed like sparks from the fire (32). The same idea is again made clear in IV. Canto 40. All the world is Brahman and in fact there is nothing beyond it (30). The Highest Truth is that all this is Brahman (35).

V. Canto 35 instructs in the Upaniṣadic manner the identity of the *ātman* and the Brahman. The *ātman* is the *Om*, all and everything in this universe. He is beyond all fruit, all action, the real cause and essence of everything and inhabits the body like the black colour in the *maṣi* or cold in snow or the fragrance in a flower (26). His power has no limit. The world and experiences of the body and the senses do not affect Him. *Viveka* and *jñāna* are the two means of knowing Him.

VIa. Canto 3 seeks to teach the oneness of the Brahman with the world and declares that all the world is but a creation of the *māyā* which in itself vanishes as soon as it is known (20). All is as it was and no change has taken place; the Void from the Void, Truth from the Truth and the Full from the Full and Brahman has come out of Brahman (11). Canto 40 discussing the essence of the Gods comes to the conclusion that it is the Brahman which is the ultimate reality and it is to be known by knowledge. A God with a few limits like those of time and space is no God at all. The very idea of worship is based on notions of duality like the deity to be worshipped, the worshipper, and the worship itself. When the Highest Brahman is known,

all these distinctions vanish (8). Canto 48 establishes the oneness of the Brahman by denying the existence of everything else and by describing the Brahman as without any properties and qualities, absolutely pure, beyond change, endless and without a beginning, eternal and peaceful. The world is this Brahman and not different from it (18, 19). Canto 67 again discusses the same topics coming to the same conclusion by taking recourse to the doctrine of *māyā* which is responsible for the appearance of the world. The creation appears in Brahman as the waves in the ocean. The power of *spanda* and *aspana* are possessed by Brahman and on account of these powers the illusion is created. The ultimate truth is Brahman, peaceful, beyond everything (36). Canto 114 discussing the nature of the Highest Reality observes that the world must not be viewed as something different and another from the Brahman as the waves are not different from water or the ornaments from gold, the flames from fire. The perception of the identity of these entities is the *nirvikalpa* state which is the goal and in that state the world does not appear as different from the Brahman (2-7, 21, 22).

VIb. Canto 32 seeking to give instruction in the nature of the Truth first traces the appearance of the world to the *avidyā* of the nature of *ahantā* and comes to the conclusion that the whole illusion can be destroyed by knowledge and declares that all the creation is like the water of the mirage appearing in place of Brahman that is all peaceful. Knowledge makes the illusion vanish. Canto 33 again affirms that the creations are like the two moons, the imaginary demons, infatuation, dreams or the mirage (26) and the pure Brahman—*nissvabhāva*—is the ultimate reality and for its movement there is no cause just as there is no cause for the motion in the wind (82). Knowledge reveals that the creation is but a *bhrānti*, illusion like the *śaśaśṛṅga* and only the pure Brahman exists (43, 44). Canto 44 observes that Brahman and *sarga* are not different. Nothing is produced here in Brahman and nothing is also destroyed. All these are only imaginary parts just as parts are imagined in water and space (42-48). When the Brahman *cit* moves it is the creation and when the movement stops it is *nirvāṇa* (37). Canto 35 describes the Brahman as the source of the creations. The three worlds are but so many waves appearing on the surface of this vast and full ocean. It is from this Brahman that the various branches of the universe proceed. The

uncaused Brahman without any cause is the seed of the creation. Its sprouting forth is creation and closing is destruction while the condition in which there is neither sprouting nor closing is the highest state. Canto 43 teaches that it is Brahman which is everywhere. The entire creation is purely a creation of the mind which ceases to exist when knowledge is acquired (61). *Nirvāṇa* is nothing but the cessation of the activity of the mind by the virtue of knowledge. The usual similes of the mirage, *bhrama* etc. are freely used (57-60). Canto 52 describes the nature of the Highest Brahman. Brahman is a matter of experience and it is peace, endless, without a beginning, of the nature of the sky, a matter to be known. It is the essence of everything but at the same time beyond everything, beyond even the very elements and the creation. In it the entire illusory phenomenon of the creation appears. The Brahman is partless and yet for the sake of convenience it may be said that space, time, wind and the whole creation is but a part of the Brahman. It is the essence of everything, at the same time beyond all change and yet ageless. This is the Highest Reality (49). Canto 58 also affirms that the creations are the Brahman and the Brahman itself is the creation, the two are one like the fire and its heat. The real state is beyond the notions of oneness and duality when the words creation and reality cease to have any meaning (19, 21). Canto 99 teaches the nature of the *parama-artha*. In the usual manner is said that the world is an illusion and it is the Brahman which is spread everywhere. The reality which the world has is the reality of the dreams. The false experience cannot be really described for it is the privilege of the fools, for the movement of the waves in a mirage is known by the fish only who live in it (41, 47, 50). Canto 172 teaches that it is the Brahman that is only one and the highest and hence the question of the memory of the creation etc. does not really arise for the *smaraṇa* refers to a thing existing but a thing has no existence (17). Cognitions by chance begin to become manifest and are essentially false. All this is *avidyā* and by putting an end to it one is released. It is declared that the world is not of the form of memory, nor possessed of any form, for the earth etc. have no existence. It is neither an illusion nor a deception. It is Brahman itself (47). Canto 177 describes the Truth. Nothing has been produced and the appearance of the diverse and destructible universe is only an illusion. The reality is the changeless, peaceful Brahman. There is nothing like a

cause. Is there any cause as to why the city of the clouds has walls in it? Just as eddies, waves do appear in water or eddies etc. appear in wind on account of the motion, in a similar manner in Brahman appears the creation (35). Canto 179 teaches that everywhere there is Brahman. The world is just a dream (18). The reality is the highest peaceful Brahman. Canto 186 teaches that all this is the Brahman. There is no difference between the world and the Brahman, just as there is no difference between the void and the space (78). Just as so many drops fly off from the main water-current at a waterfall in a similar manner from the Brahman so many things emanate (79, 80). Again in Canto 189, the same conclusion is offered in (20) saying that all this is illusion and it is the Brahman that is the Ultimate Reality. Cantos 206 and 207 give the important question in the matter of the Brahman and the answer to it. But nothing new is stated and the earlier observations that the world is an illusion and that the Brahman alone is the reality and that its knowledge leads to salvation are again affirmed (38).

Thus in many chapters is the Brahman, the ultimate reality of the Vedāntins, described in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

MĀYĀ

V. Cantos 44-50 deal with the story of Gādhi and introduce the word and the concept of *māyā*. Gādhi wants to have a peep into the *māyā* of Viṣṇu, *māyā* which is *saṁsāra*, producer of blindness and created by Him, the Highest Lord (44.13). Then the story narrates the several interesting experiences of Gādhi as his becoming the King of the *cāṇḍālas* etc. At the end Gādhi asks the explanation of this darkness—*atitamomayī māyā*—which he had seen and which was almost miraculous. Viṣṇu then explains that the *māyā* is nothing but the work of the mind, the *citta*, for the world, earth etc. are not existing externally as they have no real existence. It is the *citta* that perceives them. As the potmaker shapes and creates the jars etc. in a similar manner the *citta* creates the different objects. The seed of the entire creation is in the mind just as the seed of the leaves and flowers always is in the seed. Thus it is clear that the *māyā* is here accepted as an ignorance of the Self by which the effects are projected forth and are perceived. The idea of illusion is clearly implied. This Viṣṇu-*māyā-darśana* may be compared with Kṛṣṇa-*māyā-darśana* in the Bhagavadgītā and the

implications would be clear. To Kṛṣṇa *māyā* is His, *daivī*, *guṇamayī* and *duratyayā* but the idea of illusion is absent. Even in the *viśvarūpa-darśana* the war is a reality, its course also having been decided. The V.R. traces the *citta* as the centre, the *nābhi* of the *māyā* (49.40). Every student of Vedānta knows the interesting history of the word and the doctrine of *māyā* and it would appear that the concept as admitted by the V.R. is clearly a Śaṅkara Vedānta concept.

This very concept of *māyā* is again explained in VIa. 67 where it is said that the *māyā* is *guṇamayī durbodhā*, it does not exist but it starts the creation and is responsible for the appearance and distortions—*pratibhāsa* and *viparyāsa*—and it disappears on examination as the waves disappear in water (7, 8, 9). The hundred dreams of the Bhikṣu are narrated in much the same strain as that of the story of Gādhī.

Vib. Canto 8 describes the very vast and grand *maṇḍapa* created by this *māyā*. This *maṇḍapa* is nothing but the glorious creation of the earth, the mountains, the Sun and the Moon etc. All this at the same time is declared to be *cittacamatkāra*, the wonderful creation of *citta*. The universe comes into existence on account of and in accordance with the *saṃkalpas*. Non-existent it appears, all things are and are not; from somewhere this unreal has sprung into existence (8, 19, 20).

The doctrine of *māyā* contemplated as outlined here and the doctrine of *avidyā* as outlined elsewhere clearly show how the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, is holding and advocating concepts from the Vedānta of the Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara school. Anyway it cannot be a creation of the age in which the BG. or the BS. were produced, and in any case cannot be the product of these circles of philosophers which produced these Vedānta texts. The V.R. is clearly under the influence of the Idealism which Nāgārjuna taught.

JAGAT

III. Canto 7 attempts to give in brief the views regarding the Universe, the Brahman and the *jīva* and their relations. It is made quite clear that the Universe has no existence and is only an illusion, like the perception of the colour of the sky (27). The very relation of the *drśya* and the *draṣṭṛ* requires duality which does not exist. Just as the *kaṭakatva* is superimposed on gold in a similar manner the

Universe is also superimposed on Brahman. That which has not been produced can have obviously no existence. Like the mirage, the two moons, the barren woman's son, or the sky-demon, the world also is an illusion having no real existence (34,35,40,42,43). The only reality is the Brahman (44).

III. Canto 12 takes up the description of the process of creation. It is said that to begin with, there was only the pure Brahman of the form of pure existence—*sattāmātraka*. In it is produced the idea *aham* and a *cit* is thus formed. From this *cit*, the element *kha* with its quality of word is formed which in its turn gives rise to the Vedas etc. Then the *ahamntā*, and the time element, *kālasattā* are produced. Then the five *tanmātrās*, *vāyu*, *tejas*, *rasa*, *gandha*—water and earth are produced. These are separate as well as mixed—*vimiśra* and *vivikta*—a conception which is Śāṃkhya in origin. The *cit* when it becomes of the essence of *saṃkalpa* transforms the elements into the myriad creation. The suppression as well as the release of these elements for creation is nothing but the activity of *cit*. Canto 18 further contains the instruction given by the Goddess Devī to Līlā that the creation is false like the dream, *svapnabhramātmaka* (29).

IV. Canto 1 discusses the question of production. The world is described as a picture in the sky, illusory, non-existent, a dream perception, of the nature of the *gandharvanagara*, the mirage, but capable of giving cognitions as if it were real. Further it is compared to so many unreal objects which give rise to true cognitions like the woman in the dream, colour of the sky, a beautiful garden in the picture, or the Sun and the fire in a picture. Like the fog it spreads but when caught it is seen to vanish. It is again said that the world and the Reality are not related like the seed and the sprout—*bīja* and *aṃkura*. The analogy is not true. For the Reality, Brahman which is beyond the six senses, more subtle than the *ākāśa*, more clear and *śūnya* than the *gagana* cannot be the *bīja* of anything. And if the *bījatā* itself is non-existent then the question of the *aṃkura* does not arise. It is worth noticing that Śāṃkara accepts the *bījaṃkurabhāva* while the V.R. does not. Its rejection from a higher point of view is merely suggested in Śāṃkara but is expressly and emphatically asserted in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa (2.4, 5.17, 23.30). Canto 2 again asserts the impossibility of all creation as the accessory causes—*sahakārī-kāraṇas*—are non-existent. The world is absolutely non-existent—*atyantābhāva*—and it

is only such a position that can realise the truth of 'All this is Brahman'. The *dr̥śya* is non-existent. In the clear and infinite sky various parts of the sky are seen; in a similar manner in one and the same pure Brahman so many different creations are seen. This very conclusion is reaffirmed in Canto 3 where the reality of Brahman and unreality of the world is made clear.

VIa. Canto 29 promises to discuss the oneness of the Universe and the Highest and points out the unreality of the forms, they being an activity of the mind, *citta*. Curiously, Vasiṣṭha makes Lord Śiva give this very instruction to him. Thus Śaivism and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa Vedānta are being fused into each other. We have here a very interesting and illuminating comparison between a real man, a man in a dream and a man in a picture. The last named one is far better than the other two; for his handsome character has some permanence and he has neither the shortlived miseries or the prolonged miseries of the other two. As for existence, all the three are of the same grade. Canto 41 again refers to the illusory character of the world. The Highest is without any qualification. Even the terms, Śiva, Brahman, *ātman*, *paramātman*, *īśa*, *cit* are all in reality inapplicable and have been made current simply for the sake of convenience. The pure *saṁvid* somehow becomes the *cit*—an object to be known—and this again assumes the nature of *aham* accompanied by the notions of time and place. This itself constitutes the *jīva*—of the nature of *spandavijñāna*—and finally assumes the nature of *buddhi*. This is again accompanied by the triple powers of *śabda*, *kriyā* and *jñāna*. All this conglomeration is nothing else but the mind, the source of all the world. From it proceeds the world with its various *sattās*; but everything is unreal just as the *gandharvanagara* or the dream. The experience is nothing but the experience of a man in a dream drinking the water of the mirage. It is the *vāsanā* that is responsible for this creation. Vedāntic Idealism and the Buddhist tone are too obvious.

VIa. Canto 61 tries to establish the complete similarity of the world and the dream. New experience is nothing but passing from one dream to another, and the stability attached to the experience is nothing but the stability attached to our dream experience.

VIb. Canto 7 describes in a fine metaphor, the tree of the world. It is said that the world is unreal like the water of the mirage. But the seed of this vast and old tree of the world is the *ahamta*, the

bhuvanas with the pleasures the roots, the stars and planets the buds, the desires the flowers. If the *ahantā*, the seed is destroyed the tree does not exist.

Vib. Canto 18 asserts that the universe has no existence and is nothing but the *cit*, *saṃkalpa*, *vāsanā* and *jīva* are the three unreal objects which the *cit*, projects forth and from which again the universe comes out. Vib. Canto 36 again explains that the seed of the world is the *icchā*, the desire. It is the cessation of the desire that is capable of stopping the illusion of the world, other remedies like knowledge etc. are of no avail whatsoever while the desire is not rooted out. Canto 55 asserts the oneness of the world and the Highest. It is the *cit* itself that is seen in the desire forms. There is nothing like time, place, substance or action (20). Cantos 59, 60 and 61 declare the unreality of the world and the oneness of the *cit*. All the manifold universes are so many projections of the *cit*. As a matter of fact, there is nothing like being or non-being in the simple and pure *cit*. Cantos 63 and 87 point out that the world is identical with the Highest and the several creations are like so many showers from the Universe-ocean. In one ocean the play and movement of the waves etc. are seen; in a similar manner the movement of the world is to be understood. Canto 104 tracing the origin of the world to the mind and identifying it with a dream declares non-existence of the world. Canto 139 tries to visualise the destruction of the universe with the rise of knowledge and perception of the pure *cit*. Canto 164 with the illustration of the mirage reduces the world to nothing and asserts oneness of the Highest, the *cit*. Canto 172 denying the existence of the world like the mirage and the perception of the jar etc. as wrong knowledge, *mithyājñāna*, maintains oneness of the Brahman. Thus time and again with its characteristic repetitions the V.R. asserts the illusion theory and falseness of the world. Its uncompromising Advaita can be seen in its constant denial of anything else other than the pure *cit* or Brahman. It does not achieve this by implications as Śaṅkara does; but it is bold enough to assert it in quite clear terms. It is also worthwhile noticing that most of the analogies almost without any exception come or agree with those current in the Śaṅkara school of the Vedānta.

CAUSATION (KĀRYAKĀRANABHĀVA)

Vib. Canto 106 takes up this topic for discussion and it is made

clear that the universe is nothing more than an illusion and a creation of the mind, and that the *cidākāśa* is the only reality. The *drśya*, as a matter of fact, does not exist; therefore, the problem of its cause does not arise (34). Since there is no duality, all talk of appearing, appearance, cause and effect is futile (41). It is the *cit* which perceives itself according to its various notions. It has no cause. Just as in dreams there arise different perceptions even when the objects perceived have no existence, in this world also perceptions are without the objects. All this external creation is only the perception of the *cit*, of itself in diverse forms, like the mountains, oceans, etc. Thus the idea of a cause and an effect is a false and irrelevant notion.

VIb. Canto 149 again takes up this very topic for discussion and declares that there is nothing like a cause for there is nothing like an effect. It is the *cit* that is responsible for everything. It is just a chance. *Kākatāliya*, that the original movement or the *spanda* arises in the *cit* and perceptions begin. Just as the creation in the dreams is just by chance and has no cause, the same is the case with the world (25). The cycle of cause and effect, of endless creations is again only the perception and play of the *cit* (33). All creations are, therefore, without any cause as such.

VIb. Canto 205 again discussing the matter for a third time declares that in reality there is only oneness, there being only one and pure Brahman existing and no duality at all. All perception is in reality like the perception in dreams or of the *saṃkalpanagara* (32-36). Just as the breeze is breeze and nothing else in spite of its *spanda* or movement, even so Brahman is for all time Brahman and nothing else (30).

In a similar strain occur discussions elsewhere in the V.R. a place that can be referred to is III.21.19-24. It has already been pointed out that the view of the V.R. regarding Release, Universe, Bondage is very much similar to that of Gaṇḍapāda regarding these very matters. This similarity becomes all the more striking when the V.R. is dealing the problem of causation, the *kāryakāraṇabhāva*. Not only is the view advocated identical but is argued in identical words and with the same *drśāntas*, the *alātacakra*, Father and Son etc. It is clear that with the negation of causation, the *ajātivāda* is but a logical conclusion.

JĪVA

III. Canto 65 takes up discussion of the *jīva*. It is said that from the highest cause the mind has come into existence as the first step in the creation. It is one *ātman* that assumes different forms in the ocean of the *cit* and appears as Brahman, *jīva*, *māyā*, *manas*, *karma*, etc. The perception of all of these is just a perception of a dream. The dream of the universe has assumed some durability on account of the intensity and power of the mind. The pure *cit*, indescribable, of uniform nature assumes the nature of *citta* when about to create. From this *citta* the idea of *jīva* arises. This *jīvatva* gives rise to *ahamkāra* which again creates *citta* and this latter creates the senses which in their turn result in the notion of the body and its actions. As a matter of fact, there is no difference between the *cit*, *ātman*, *jīva* and *citta*, *deha* and *karman*. The *karman* itself is the *deha* and the *citta* itself is the *jīva*. This *jīva* is, as a matter of fact the *cit*, the Highest *ātman*. Thus the *jīva* is not different from the Highest. *Dvaita* or duality has no place here (1, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13). Canto 91 deals with the appearance of the *jīva* and it is again stated that it is the mind—*manas*—that is the creator and the *puruṣa* (4). The *ativāhika* or the subtle body with its various desires etc. is called as the body—*deha*—but when in its purer form with the desires decreased it is known as the *jīva* (22, 23). It is the pure *cit* itself that assumes the forms of the *jīva* and the mind and then cognises the body. It is a prolonged dream, creating its own power, preceded by the illusion of the *tanmātrās*, etc. and is of the nature of the perception of the two moons. Perception is the result of the relation between two similars. The *cit* itself is divided into two parts, the perceiver and the perceived and the illusions of the *jīva* begin. The notions of *aham* and *jīva* simply do not exist and are simply ideas as the ideas of waves etc. with reference to water. It is the mind that assumes the different forms of the objects. The notion of the *jīva* is comparable to the notion of the mirage or the *vetāla* imagined by a child (27, 28, 35, 44, 47, 54).

IV. Canto 42 discusses the appearance of the *jīva* in this world. The *jīva* is nothing but a *spanda* of the *ātman*, the *cit*. As the flame of the lamp exists by its own internal movement or as the waves etc. appear in water by the internal movement so also the *jīva* appears in the *cit* by its internal movement. It is the *spandaśakti* that is responsible for this phenomenon. The body is known as the *kṣetra* while the

cit that cognises it is the *kṣetrajña*. This *kṣetrajña* when a victim of the *vāsanā* comes to possess *ahamkāra*, then *buddhi*, then mind and then the varied experience through it. Thus the *cetas* essentially of the nature of *śakti* possessing the *ahamkāra* gets itself almost chained and imprisoned like the insect that creates its nest and gets shut into it. It is interesting to find the famous *kṛmi* and *kośa* analogy of Śaṅkara occurring here. What is true of one *jīva* is also true of the so many souls which have come into existence. These are just like so many waves on the ocean of *cit*.

Vib. Canto 50 speaks of the seven kinds of the *jīvas*, the different classes being distinguished from each other by the intensity or otherwise of the *vāsanās* of each. *Svapna-jāgara*, *saṁkalpa-jāgara*, *kevala-jāgrat*, *cira-jāgrat*, *ghana-jāgrat*, *jāgrat-svapna* and *kṣīṇa-jāgrat* are the seven classes into which the various *jīvas* can be classified. Those who have gone asleep in some former existence and see the creation as a dream are *svapna-jāgaras*. To some on account of the long duration of the dream, it has appeared like the *jāgrat* and they are, therefore, *svapna-jāgrats*. Others on account of their *saṁkalpas* are witnessing the world and these are the *saṁkalpa-jāgrats*. There are some who have been created in the very first creation and are witnessing it; these having no dream have only the *jāgrat*, and so are the *kevala-jāgrats*. But these souls on account of their very long contact with the *jāgrat* have an attachment with it, an attachment that is too deep to be rooted out and so these are the *ghana-jāgrats*. Those who see the *jāgrat* as a *svapna* are the *jāgrat-svapnas* and these have become wiser on account of their contact with the *śāstras* and the wise. The *kṣīṇa-jāgrats* are those who have knowledge and have secured rest in the Highest. The first five are in bondage while the last two are on their way to release. The classification is no doubt very illuminating.

VIa. Canto 55 makes Lord Kṛṣṇa discuss with Arjuna the nature of *jīva*. The *jīva* is just a *māyā-puruṣa*, carrying a load of so many illusions and is drawn by his *vāsanās* as a beast by a rope. It is surrounded by the subtle elements, earth, water, fire, wind, *ākāśa*, mind and intelligence and occupies the body, like the bird in a cage. Death is cessation of activity consequent upon the going out of the *jīva* and its presence in the body is life. *Vāsanās* are the root-cause of all the trouble and these can be overcome by exertion, *puruṣārtha*. The *jīva* is nothing but an illusion created by the *cit* on account of

the intense *vāsanās* and *mokṣa* is nothing but the liberation from all the *vāsanās*. All this teaching is far different from the views of the Lord as given in the Bhagavadgītā which follows more or less the Upaniṣads. It is quite clear that the V.R. is forcing the Bhagavadgītā teach its own views. The clear idealistic or Gauḍapādiya tone of the V.R. can be very easily distinguished from the theistic and Upaniṣadic tone of the Bhagavadgītā.

CITTA

The *citta* occupies a very important place in the philosophy of the V.R. The entire creation is nothing but an activity of the mind and is, therefore, purely imaginary. III. Canto 84 clearly affirms that the Universe is an illusion (14) and distinction—*bheda*—is only from the point of view of practical life—*vyavahāra* and not a reality—like the *vetāla* imagined for the sake of a child (20). It is the mind that sets up the universe like the city of the clouds, and this illusory spreading out of the mind is itself called the world (30). It is the *citta* that displays itself as the world, for it is the *citta* polluted by the different passions that is the *saṃsāra* and nothing else. The *cit* element of the *citta* is the seed of all creation and the non-*cit* element that appears as the world; but all this is illusion. It is this *citta*, therefore, that deserves to be properly trained and controlled and awakened to the real state of affairs (31-43).

III. Canto 92 declares the perfect identity between the mind and the body, the relation between the two being like the one that exists between the wind and its movement or the seed and oil. Every being has two bodies, the mental and physical. The latter is one of flesh, helpless and liable to destruction. The mental body is one which carries out its work in no time and is constantly moving. It never fails to get whatever it wants or longs for. The mind is capable of seeing anything anywhere as for night in the orb of the Sun or waves on the moving surface of the water in an ocean. It can feel the heat of flames in the moonlight or sweetness in poison and be delighted. It creates a garden in the sky, cuts it and again makes it grow. Thus it is the mind that is responsible for the creation and can create all things (9-36). In Canto 93, the mind is described as the immediate step in creation after the Brahman. From this mind the entire creation proceeds.

III. Canto 96 proceeds to describe the mind in greater detail. Mind is of the nature of *bhāvanā*—imagination—with movement as its property. The mind is the form possessing the power of imagination, *saṃkalpa*, a form of *ātman*, the Great. Action and mind or *ātman* and mind are not different as the fire and its heat are not different. *Karman* is called as Mind; for the senses achieve through it whatever the mind longs for. In fact, mind, *buddhi*, *ahamkāra*, *citta*, *karman*, *kalpanā*, *saṃsṛti*, *vāsanā*, *vidyā*, *prayatna*, *smṛti*, *indriya*, *prakṛti*, *māyā*, *kriyā* all are synonyms and nothing more. Thus when imagination having the potentiality to create is almost about to create, it is known as 'mind'; further when the idea is capable of grasping the limit it is called as the *buddhi*; when the same faculty with a sense of egoism creates the false existence, it is known as *ahamkāra*; when it assumes the thinking nature and abandoning one thinks of another, it is known as the *citta*; when it assumes the form of movement or motion it is known as *karman*; when abandoning its one uniform nature it imagines something else or another then it is known as *kalpanā*; when it begins to think in terms of something as seen or not seen before, with reference to the object then it is known as *smṛti*; when it assumes the subtle nature of the object experienced without doing anything else then it is known as *vāsanā*; when it becomes conscious of the *ātman*, it is known as *vidyā*; when it forgets the *ātman* due to false ideas it is known as *mala*; it tastes, smells, sees, eats, hears and touches and delights Indra, the Soul and hence is known as the *indriya*; being the basic cause of the universe it is known as the *prakṛti*; since it produces what as a matter of fact does not exist it is known as *māyā*; when the different senses function it is known as the *kriyā*; thus all these different words denote one and the same thing and therefore all are synonyms. The mind can neither be described as *cetana* or *jaḍa*. It is that which causes the perception of the universe and the non-perception of the *ātman*, a motion of the *cit* and this entity like an actor assumes different forms. The different systems name it in a manner they like; but it is the mind which is the pivot of the whole creation. If a man is able to vanquish his *manas* or *citta* he is in fact liberated. When the mind becomes absolutely uniform without having any *vikāra* or diversity then the universe disappears. Just as one Time assumes the forms of different seasons the mind also, though one, assumes different forms. Just as from the living spider

the non-living or *jaḍa* thread comes out, in a similar manner from the Brahman which is all knowledge and ever awake the *jaḍa prakṛti* comes out. Thus it is the mind that is really supreme and is to be overcome. The same idea is again developed in cantos 98 and 99.

III. Canto 103 seeks to describe the importance of the *citta* and says that the *citta* is but a wave rising on the ocean of the Highest and spreads out the universe by expanding itself. The entire world, steady and moving and with its infinite variety has arisen out of the *citta* only. The agent, the action, the means, the seer, the seen and the seeing—all this is the *citta* itself (1, 5, 18).

III. Canto 110 takes up the discussion of the *citta* or the *manas* or mind. It is the mind that is the maker of things. The man is his mind and not his body. It is the mind that is the elements and the senses. When the mind is conquered all these are also conquered. Whatever is done by the mind that is really done. The universe is the mind itself. The happiness and misery are present in the mind like the oil in the seed. The wonderful creation of the universe is an action of the mind, the poisonous tree of life grows out of it and hence it really deserves to be completely rooted out, otherwise in the eddies created by the mind, the men—the bees—fall a prey to it (14-25, 57, 67). The next canto (111) takes up the discussion of the remedy to conquer the mind. Without the complete cessation of the action of the mind there cannot be any liberation. This mind can be overcome by *pauruṣa* alone. The mind like one's own son should be engaged on the proper path of conduct leading to the highest good. When the Ultimate Truth and the Reality dawn on the mind, the mind completely melts, vanishes and is destroyed and thus only is liberation secured (2, 12, 21, 32). The *śāstra* and the company of the wise help a man in achieving this end (5). Canto 121 seeks to establish the non-existence of the *citta* (67). Like the imaginary demon the *citta* harasses the ignorant. There is nothing like the *citta* (65). The *dṛśya* has no existence apart from the Highest Brahman as the ornaments etc. have no existence apart from the pure gold, clay products have no existence apart from clay, waves have no existence apart from water. This is precisely the meaning of the Upaniṣadic utterances that clay alone is the reality. *Avidyā* and the *ātman* cannot be related in any manner. The relation of contact cannot exist between the opposites. All duality is false and the *citta* which is responsible for it is not a real existing

thing. When the *citta* is abandoned the person becomes steady and the idea of creation or bondage disappears (33, 50-53, 68).

IV. Canto 20 describes the mind as the cause of the *moha*, infatuation of man and of the existence of the universe. This mind spreads out the world and man is nothing but the mind. The mind, the *puruṣa*, therefore, is to be directed in the right path. The conquest of the universe depends entirely on the conquest of the mind (3, 4, 5). Canto 24 describes the benevolent nature of the mind, if under control. This jewel if properly washed and cared for shines in a very brilliant manner. The mind then becomes a very fine counsellor directing the path of salvation. The conquest of the senses and the destruction of the desires is the way to conquer the mind.

IV. Canto 54 discusses the importance of the *saṁkalpa* from the point of view of creation. *Samkalpa* is just the other word for the mind or *citta*. It has been defined as the potentiality to become the *cetya*—perceived, produced—of the *cit*, the infinite *ātman* having the property of existence pure and simple (2). From one *saṁkalpa*, another is produced and so these develop in a very natural and spontaneous manner ultimately resulting in causing misery. The world is but an idea, a *saṁkalpa*. The *saṁkalpa* is just a matter of chance, *kākatāliya*, and false of the type of the ideas of mirage, two moons etc. If the *saṁkalpa* is *śānta*, the world and the misery connected with it also would naturally become *upaśānta*. Beyond *saṁkalpa* there is nothing. The mind under the influence of the *vāsanā* functions and perceives its desired objects. It, like the monkey, assumes various forms. Realisation of the evanescent and false character of the *saṁkalpa* is *jñāna* and leads one to salvation.

V. Canto 11 gives the thoughts of Janaka regarding the *citta*. Janaka tries to control the mind, for it is out of the different ideas of the mind that the universe springs. There cannot be any relation between a non-existent entity and an existing entity. Just as the sprinkling of water is responsible for the varied and vast growth of a tree, in a precisely similar manner it is the many and different desires that are responsible for the growth of the universe. Therefore, it is the fickleness of the mind that is to be overcome by one desirous of salvation. Canto 13 again discusses this topic of the conquest of the mind. For the sake of release, destiny, actions, wealth or relatives are of no

use by themselves. It is one's own efforts that lead to the conquest of the mind and thence to release (8). The bondage is only one and that is of the mind. The Desired and the Undesired are the two monkeys that constantly are busy with their pranks of the *citta*. They are to be controlled by the mind. The mind running in several channels is to be conquered (27-36). When the *cit-śakti* and the *spanda-śakti* come together, the result is the appearance of an idea. The mind also has no existence; therefore, how can the illusion created by it have an existence in reality. The perception of the universe is a folly of the mind. The *prāṇa* as stationed in the heart has experiences outside with the help of the mind. *Vairāgya*, destruction of desires and knowledge of the Brahman, the Highest Reality, are the means to control the *prāṇa* and thus only the mind can be overcome (84, 85). Canto 14 continues the description of the *citta* and it is said that it has no existence. The universe is nothing but an unending process of destruction (19-29). But all this is nothing but a play of the mind. Like the imaginary demon it strikes the man. The lion, the Self is bound in the chains of mind and, therefore, has to be released. To conquer this demon, the serpent in the body, the mind, the spell to be used is right knowledge. *Cittopaśama*, cessation of the activity of the mind, is the real and highest happiness (60, 63, 64).

V. Canto 24 giving the conversation between Bali and Virocana states that it is right knowledge that leads to the conquest of the mind. Respect for the scriptures, teachers, meditation, etc. are the means recommended for this purpose. When the Highest Brahman is seen and the illusion of the type of the mirage is shattered then salvation is reached. Such release is not a matter of destiny but a state to be reached by one's own efforts, *pauruṣa*.

V. Canto 81 states that the *citta* has no existence. It does not exist; it is illusory and therefore is non-existent like the tree in the sky. Just as a child in a moving boat sees the movement in a pillar, in a similar manner the ignorant one sees the mind. All is Brahman and the *citta* has by no means any existence. With the disappearance of the *citta*, thirst, folly and other maladies also disappear and one is released. Canto 83 again affirms the same conclusion (44, 45) that the *ātman* alone has existence but the *citta* and the world it produces have no existence. Canto 90 also discusses the same topic arriving at the same conclusion. The destruction of the *citta* is of two types, the

sarūpa and the *arūpa*, the first taking place in the *jīvanmukta* condition while the latter in the condition of the released after death. The existence of the mind is for misery and its destruction is certainly for happiness. So long as the mind exists, the misery cannot be eradicated. The mind is the seed of the forest of misery. When the pairs, *dvandvas*, do not disturb the balance of the mind and do not affect a man, then is his *citta* destroyed. The *sthitaprajña* of the Bhagavadgītā or the *jīvanmukta* of the V.R. have this destruction of the *citta* effected. With the disappearance of the *citta*, only the *sattva* element shines and the Soul being pure is not affected by anything. With this *sattva* in its turn disappearing in the Highest the *arūpa* destruction of the mind takes place.

VIa. Canto 4 repeats the view that the one *ātman* is the only reality and the *citta* and its products are illusory. When the deadly poison in the form of the desires for happiness and enjoyments of different types is completely overcome, then this perception of universe, this folly also naturally ceases to exist. Right knowledge, *adhyātma-śāstra*, helps one to achieve this result. Destruction of the folly is the destruction of the *citta* and with the destruction of the *citta* the very *vāsanās* also cease to function. Release is nothing different from the freedom from the *vāsanās* (3, 5). Canto 44 takes up the discussion of the *citta* and declares that the world is a creation on account of the movement, *spanda* of the *citta*. *Māyā* has arisen on account of the *spanda* of the *citta* just as the wave appears on the water on account of its movement. With the absence of the *spanda* the wave would not be there; in a similar manner if the movement of the *citta* is not there, *māyā* also would cease to exist. By *tyāga*, renunciation, the desires are overcome; by realisation of the knowledge of the *ātman* and the control of the *prāṇa* the *citta* is reduced to naught, movementlessness and thus then there is no room for the *cittaspana* and the consequent creation or *māyā*. Knowledge results in the end of the *citta* and the wrong knowledge is the beginning of the activity of the *citta*. The man of knowledge has no *citta* for his *citta* is known as the *sattva* (22, 23, 28, 30). The happiness arising out of the negation of the *citta* is really beyond any description (27). Things are evanescent; for they are not the same at the time of enjoyment as they appeared at the time of the rise of a desire for them. A life based on the principle of renunciation has a natural effect that desires disappear, imaginative

thinking ceases and the mind does not function as mind. Knowledge wins peace. This is the way to conquer the *citta* which in reality is like the horn of the hare (32). Canto 56 describes the *citta*. Kṛṣṇa explains to Arjuna that the painter Citta has painted the three worlds in a void. The autumnal clouds are seen but have no substance. The void is forever a void while the paintings of the painter Citta remain only imaginary. Even the question of wiping the pictures out does not arise. Just as the mind is able to create the non-existing world it is certainly capable of destroying this imaginary world. What a fine painting has been drawn by the mind ! Its brilliance is simply dazzling but then it is without any substance and is false (8-37). Right knowledge is nothing but the knowledge of the secret of the art and work of the painter Citta—*citrakṛt*.

Vib. Canto 138 again arrives at the same conclusion of the non-existence of the *citta* and Vasiṣṭha observes that the body itself has no existence, it being an idea of the mind. All this is nothing but Brahman, the pure and simple *cit*. Its imaginary movement is *prāṇa*; similarly the senses and the body etc. come into existence, all being purely imaginations of the mind. It may be said that it is the Brahman, the form of the imagining mind and experiencing whatever it imagines. This experience is not different from the experience in dreams.

Thus it will be seen that the V.R. is never tired of repeating its instruction that all the world is a creation of the mind and that the mind itself has no existence. Thus the world is regarded as purely mental and the mind itself is regarded as unreal. The uncompromising idealism of the V.R. is a step ahead of the Śaṅkara Vedānta and is no doubt under the Buddhistic influence. It is very interesting to note that even Kṛṣṇa of the Bhagavadgītā is made to teach the idealistic philosophy of the V.R. by the author.

SVAPNA

III. Canto 42 takes up the topic of the reality of the dreams for discussion and declaring that the dreams are false—*asatya*—adds that the world-experience is just like the dream-experience (8, 16). To illustrate the unreal character the analogy of the mirage is also referred to (3). Canto 57 again borrowing words from Gauḍapāda (50) declares the complete similarity between the waking condition and the dream

condition. Just as at the end of the dream objects which come out of the *saṁvit* enter into it again, in a similar manner the object which is projected by the *saṁvit* in the waking condition also returns to it. In addition to the dream analogy the *rajjubhujamga* analogy is used in 37 and the word illusion, *bhrānti*, is expressly used. In the dreams the *saṁvit* and the *padārtha* are not different. The absence of the *sahakārikāraṇas* also makes the *padārthas* in the dreams unreal. Thus when a jar is seen in a dream, the necessary causes like the *daṇḍa* and wheels etc. do not exist and therefore the product also cannot be real. It is the *saṁvit* itself shining in the form of the object, as the relation between the *saṁvit* and the object is like that between water and its liquid nature or *vāyu* and its movement. The perception, therefore, arises from *mithyājñāna*. Of the two, the *saṁvit* and the objects in the dream, the former alone is real; for it eternally exists, while the latter are false and do not exist. Hence the experience in dreams is void, an illusion brought on by *māyā—sūnyāḥ svapnāmbhūtayaḥ* (54). And the waking condition is also in no way different from the dream-experience (50).

IV. Canto 19 takes up the discussion of the analysis of the nature of waking, dream, deep sleep and the *turīya* states. As a matter of fact, there is no difference between the waking and the dream state, except the fact that in the *jāgrat* condition the cognition is of a persisting nature—*sthira-pratyaya*—in other words the object appears to persist and hence seems real, while in the dreams the cognition is of a fleeting nature, it does not last and hence the object is thought unreal. In the dreams the *pratyaya* is *asthira*. But it is quite possible that the waking condition could be a dream state while the dream state could be a waking condition just as it was in the case of Hariścandra who had a dream of twelve years. The striking distinction is that the *jāgrat* is *sthira* while the dream is *kṣaṇabhāṅga*. The *jīva-dhātu*, the very force of life is in the body; and when the body leans towards an action—mental, lingual or physical—the force impelled by breeze rises and pervades all the body and the *saṁvit* arises and perceiving itself, proceeding out through the senses like the eyes etc. and thus slipping out, it assumes the different forms that are perceived; and this is how the waking state develops. On the other hand when the body is not excited in the effort for any of the threefold action and there is no internal excitement but the *saṁvit* quietly shines within itself like the oil in the

sesamum and does not slip out through the senses but is all peace within, the *suṣupti* state develops which is nothing but a clear, pure, and peaceful state of the *saṁvit*. The *turiya* is the state wrought on by knowledge and is the state in which the awakened Yogin lives in the different states, the waking, the dream and the *suṣupti* states. The *turiya* is the *suṣupti* permanently realized. Finally, when in sleep there is only internal excitement and the *citta* perceives the universe in itself, it is the dream state. It is the internal perception of the *cit* by the *cit*. Thus waking is the external experience while dream is the internal experience, one with the senses functioning while the other without the aid of the senses, but both nevertheless are plays of the *saṁvit*.

VIa. Canto 61 in a very clear-cut manner states that the universe is but a dream of Prajāpati. It is only an appearance and by no means a reality (3). The dream is only an evanescent phenomenon but its evanescent character is not perceived by the dreamer; in a similar manner the destructibility or the evanescent character of the world is not perceived by us. Untrue things can beget only untrue things (9). The length of the dream is no argument for its reality. It is a community dream yet each perceiving it in his own way (13). For in the final analysis it is the perception of the *cit*. Just as water being liquid goes on whirling so also *citta* goes on whirling, creating the series of *sargas*. All sorts of wonders having no real essence appear in this dream, the creation. The dreamer attaches stability to the objects in the dream and the experience; so also the man attached to worldly life perceives stability in the objects and the experience thereof. But then it is all moving from one illusion to another like passing from one dream to another (29, 30).

VIb. Canto 105 seeks to explain the identity of the dream and the waking condition. Whether in the dream or in the *jāgrat*, the world has no existence and for the *jāgrat*, the dream is the only analogy. In the play of the *cit* everything turns topsyturvy, just as the day changes into the night and all impossible things begin to happen like the birth of the *vandhyāputra*. Birth and death are similar notions to which reality is ascribed. As in the dream so in the waking state all sorts of objects are perceived in space by the *cit*. Both experiences are equally unreal. Just as the two Suns or two men are alike, in a similar manner the *jāgrat* and the dream are alike (18). A person in his dream is united with his relatives and dies but is awakened and in reality is

not dead though he died in his dream; in a similar manner a man is united with his relatives here and dies; but this is no death for he is awakened elsewhere. The analogy between the dream and the *jāgrat* is complete (45).

Vib. Canto 137 again takes up the discussion of the nature of the three states of experience and the *turīya*. The identity of the *jāgrat* and the *svapna* is clearly affirmed (38) for both the states are nothing but the imaginary perceptions of the *cit* in mere space. When the *cit*, however, perceives the falsity of both these conditions and exists within itself in temporary peace it is the *suṣupti*; but the *turīya* is the condition brought about by knowledge in which the world does not exist, the reality being known and perceived. The world has no cause, all this is Brahman which is unborn and supreme peace; this perception and the permanent possession of this perception is the *turīya*. Thus the *jāgrat* is the external perception of the objects like the oceans, mountains, quarters etc. while the *svapna* is the internal perception of the objects and the *suṣupti* is the peace which the tired perceiving *cit* enjoys for a while and the *turīya* is the permanent peace which the truly wise one wins (38-60).

Vib. Canto 145 again taking up the same discussion declares that the perception of the external and the internal universe in the two, the *jāgrat* and the *svapna* is the result and work of the two sets of the senses that the *jīva* possesses; the external senses perceive the external world and the internal senses perceive the internal world. At all times and at all places the *jīva* is gifted with the senses through which the work of perception is carried on (1-7). Then in verses 8, 23, 34, 40, are described the various dreams that the *jīva* has on account of the influence of the various *rasas* like the *pitta*, *śleṣma*, *vāta* etc. and finally it is declared that the senses perceive the many and different illusions due to the disturbance among the *dhātus* (70). Thus it is the balanced condition or otherwise, *samadhātutva* or the *asamadhātutva* of the *jīva* that is responsible for the perception and experience of the illusion. The V.R. would thus appear to give a physiological explanation of the phenomenon of dreams.

Vib. Cantos 147 and 148 take up the discussion of this same topic and the conclusions offered are very interesting. The perception of the world in the mirror of the *cit* is just similar to the perception of

the reflections in the mirror (147.20). One who realizes that the *cit* is the only reality does not suffer from the duality. The perception of the manifold phenomena of the Universe is nothing but a mere chance—*kākatāliya*. As a matter of fact, the objects—*padārthas*—do not exist externally and it is one and the same *saṁvid* that perceives itself. This perception is in reality the dream and yet the quality of truth, *satyatva* is also superimposed on it. Since all this is Brahman and nothing else, the question of something being *satya* or real and other being *asatya* does not arise at all. To the wise the dream is neither non-existing nor of the essence of *sat*. The *jāgrat* itself is a dream and there is no difference or distinction between the two. *Jāgrat*, *svapna* and *suṣupti* are all synonyms (2, 3, 13, 14, 18, 19).

Vib. Canto 165 again takes up the topic of the identity of the *jāgrat* and the *svapna*. The three conditions of *jāgrat*, *svapna* and *suṣupti* are so curiously interwoven and linked with each other that the three are almost identical. They are mutually caused and further overlap each other. Hence it is proper to speak of a threefold division of each of these and characterised by the other two. Thus we have the *jāgrat-jāgrat*, *jāgrat-svapna* and *jāgrat-suṣupti*; *svapna-jāgrat*, *svapna-svapna* and *svapna-suṣupti*; and lastly *suṣupti-jāgrat*, *suṣupti-svapna* and *suṣupti-suṣupti*. One has to go to the Vārtika of Sureśvara for illustrations and explanations of these complicated varieties as he has explained them in his very first *prakaraṇa* that deals with the conditions before the creation—*Prāgutpatti-prakaraṇa*.

Vib. Canto 167 again seeks to establish the utterly non-existing character of the *jāgrat*, *svapna* and the *suṣupti*. Almost in the tone of Gauḍapāda it is declared that these conditions do not exist and are mere names. *Ākāśa*, all peaceful is the only and the ultimate reality (17, 18, 19). The perception of the foam, bubbles and the waves are so many attitudes resorted to while looking at the ocean. The *anubhava* always follows and corresponds to the *saṁvid* and hence is the existence of the external object. All the external universe is thus to be traced to the internal sensation of the same. *Antaḥsaṁvedana* is the root-cause of the Experience. Just as the horn of the hare, the tree in the sky or the son of a barren woman simply do not exist; in a similar manner the external universe always does not exist. Thus the external universe is an imagination of the ignorant and if not seen,

it does not exist and if seen, it has no existence at all (21, 22, 32, 33). Thus it will be seen that the V.R. takes precisely the same stand as that of Gauḍapāda and using the famous Śaṅkarite illustrations traces the universe to the activity of the ignorant mind. It is doubtful whether Bādarāyaṇa and Śaṅkara too accept the perfect analogy of the dream and the *jāgrat*; but the V.R. has been bold in maintaining absolute and perfect identity between the three conditions of experience. The argument here when compared with the arguments of Śaṅkara against the Vijñānavādins are very illuminating and clearly reveal the Buddhistic tendency of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

AVIDYĀ

III. Canto 113 discusses *avidyā*, a doctrine which is of paramount importance in the Vedānta philosophy. The excessive poetical charm and flowing eloquence of the passage make any systematic rendering extremely difficult. The following points however about the *avidyā* can be made out. It is identical with the *vāsanā* (12) which creates infatuation for the mind and is in itself void of any essence. Though itself not existing, it has in a curious manner multiplied itself (11). It is constantly flowing, almost like a river and at a given moment it is neither the same nor does it disappear altogether. In the pure light of knowledge it is dark and gloomy but in the darkness of ignorance it shines at its best. It has some element of the *sattva* yet it is the *tamas* that really dominates (13, 19, 20). Like lightning it is unsteady, approaches unsought, charming yet disastrous in the end, dry like the mirage, like a magician turns a night into years and a year into a moment; but nevertheless it has no reality, just as a picture of a woman however beautiful is no woman. It is this *avidyā* which creates several creations in a pure *cetas* like the waves in an ocean. It creates the illusions of two moons and appears without any cause like the blue colour of the sky. When it vanishes after having shone for a while, it disappears like the flame extinguished, where one knows not (12-55). The very tempting seductive character of the *avidyā* is very eloquently described in a highly poetical passage. The Upaniṣadic background is clear in 6 where it is argued that there being absolute oneness the question of doing anything or anything being done does not arise. *Kena kampaśyet* etc. is the Upaniṣadic passage as the basis.

III. Canto 117 describes the sevenfold effect of the *avidyā* or

ajñāna. A soul possessed by ignorance is likely to experience the seven stages and also their infinite variety (11, 12) : the *bīja-jāgrat*, *jāgrat*, *mahā-jāgrat*, *jāgrat-svapna*, *svapna*, *svapna-jāgrat* and *suṣuptaka* are the seven stages of *ajñāna* or *avidyā*. The first is the condition in which the seed of the *jāgrat* is potentially present in the pure *cit*, in the second the consciousness develops notions of *aham*, *idam*, *mama*; while these very notions when firm and fixed constitute the third *mahā-jāgrat* state. The *jāgrat-svapna* is the perception of two moons, mirage, *śuktikā*, all *rūḍha* and *arūḍha manorājya* while *svapna* is the dream state and when a *svapna* becomes firm and fixed, *dr̥ḍha abhiniveśa* like that of Hariścandra for a period of twelve years, the state is called *svapna-jāgrat* (11-23). Of these seven stages each one has almost a hundred branches (25). It is right thinking and philosophical insight that takes man beyond these seven stages of *ajñāna* (29). The clear-cut analysis of the *avidyā* is a very interesting one and must be put down as an original contribution of the V.R.

IV. Canto 41 discusses the *avidyā* but here the *avidyā* is called *māyā* (15). This *māyā* is a queer entity that delights in its own destruction, whose nature cannot be defined and which vanishes being examined and screens the power of thinking and creates universes; unseen it works but seen it vanishes; though false, like something exceedingly real it has created its knowledge and has created differences in that Ultimate where there is absolutely no room for any difference. The *ātman* is really the *puruṣottama*, a phrase that reminds one of the Bhagavadgītā. He who realizes that all this world is purely mental and has no real existence while it is Brahman alone that has existence and reality, enjoys *mokṣa*. He sees the universe but without any attachment and hence is not lost in suffering. Unless one goes beyond the river of *avidyā*, release is impossible. It is no use looking for the source of this *avidyā*, one should rather see the ways of overcoming it. As a matter of fact, it has no reality and if examined it does not function. It is *kudṛṣṭi*, wrong knowledge and as such is to be destroyed.

VIa. Cantos 7 and 8 describe the *ajñāna* or *avidyā* in a highly poetical and flowery language. Youth, Old age, Wealth, Greed and Desires etc. are the terrible monsters that play havoc in the night of *māyā*. The *avidyā* is a creeper that blooms on the slopes of the moun-

tain *cit*. *Sukha*, *duḥkha*, *bhāva*, *jñāna* and *ajñāna* are the roots as well as the fruits of this creeper. It is a deadly poisonous plant that produces the infatuation of *saṁsāra* when it is touched, but disappears when pondered over and treated. It is ever young but always losing its essence. It assumes infinite and diverse forms like the creations, the gods, the Vedas and the *śāstras*. All these are the products of *avidyā*. All that is *dṛśya* is the work of this *avidyā* (24, 31, 32). The observation that even the gods like Hara, the *śāstras* and the Vedas are also the products of *avidyā* is important, as it is but another point of contact of the Vedānta of the V.R. and that of the Śaṅkara school.

VIa. Cantos 9 and 10 are interesting since they discuss the remedy against this *avidyā*. *Avidyā* is identified with the *prakṛti* of the Sāṁkhyas which, therefore, is *triguṇātmaka*—of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* (6). But the Sāṁkhya or the BG. idea is developed further by saying that the three *guṇas* themselves are again threefold and thus the *avidyā* becomes ninefold on account of this *guṇa-bheda* (8). All the *dṛśya* is but a creation, projection of the *avidyā*. The gods are but a *sātvika* part of this *avidyā*. *Avidyā* arises out of *vidyā* like the bubbles in water and merges in it like the bubbles again. *Vidyā* and *avidyā* are identical like the water and the waves. The very high idealism is best brought out in the observation that there is nothing like *vidyā* or *avidyā* but the *saṁvid* is the only reality. When the Highest *sat* is not seen then it is *avidyā* and when the same is seen it is *vidyā*, the destruction of the *avidyā*. If *avidyā* itself does not exist its destruction has no meaning and hence even the *vidyā* ceases to have any meaning; does not exist. All the world is in the *cit* just as the ghee in milk, fire in the sun-stone, and it comes out of it like the sparks from the fire or the lustre from the Sun. When the iron particles move on account of the vicinity of the magnet, agency is attributed to the magnet; in a similar manner this body moves on account of the vicinity of the *cit*. The verses 31, 32 in canto 9 are reminiscent of the Śaṅkarabhāṣya on BS. II.2.2 where the magnet and the iron particles *dṛṣṭānta* is referred to. The relation of *jīvatva* that is felt inwards is unreal like the *rajju-sarpa-bhrama* (3). *Ātman* unknown is the cause of the illusions; and its knowledge puts an end to all cognitions. *Puruṣa* is *cittamātra* and in its destruction is the disappearance of the *puruṣa* as well. *Mokṣa* or the destruction of the *avidyā* is nothing but the realisation of the *sattā-sāmānya* and the complete destruction of

the *vāsanās*. If the *vāsanā* is present in a germinal form, the state is *suṣupti* which results in rebirths, *vāsanā* not being completely rooted out; but the *turiya* is the *mokṣa* for in that state all the *vāsanās* are destroyed. *Ātma-drṣṭi* unrealized produces the phantom of the universe and hence its absence is *avidyā*, the cause of the universe. The fact is that there is no *avidyā*, for everything is Brahman, partless and uniform (6, 13, 16, 20, 29, 30, 45). The combination of the BG. and the Sāṃkhya conception and of Śaṃkara Vedānta is obvious.

VIIb. Canto 36 discusses the *saṃsārabīja* and gives the conclusion that the Desire is the *bīja* of the *saṃsāra* (44a). Canto 107 discusses the existence of the *avidyā* and comes out with the *ajātivāda* of Gauḍapāda in almost identical verses (10, 11). Canto 162 discusses the destruction of the *avidyā* and says that the *tattvajñāna* of the *cit* puts an end to *avidyā* (28).

The influence of Gauḍapāda in all these passages is obvious while the nearness of the V.R. philosophy to Śaṃkara Vedānta is also clearly seen. The *avidyā* doctrine, though derived from the Upaniṣads and the Gītā is developed and stated with emphasis.

BANDHA

III. Canto 1 discusses the cause of the *bandha* or the bondage. The knowledge of the *mokṣa* rather presumes the knowledge of the *bandha* (21). The *bandha* can be defined as the existence of the *drśya* for the *draṣṭṛ*. The seer is *baddha* on account of the *drśya* and he is liberated when the *drśya* ceases to exist (22). At the same time it is to be remembered that mere non-existence of the *drśya* does not mean liberation though the existence of the *drśya* means *bandhana* (6). The Highest Reality is *sat* which is *anākhyā*, *anabhivyakta* and neither light nor darkness. The same *sat* is variously styled as *rta*, *ātmā*, *parambrahma*, *satya* etc. for the sake of convenience. The same *sat* becomes *jīva* and then in its turn becomes *manas* which is really responsible for setting the myriad waves of creation in motion. The illusory glory of the world is a creation of the mind. The world and the Brahman are not different as the ornament is not different from gold. The illusory world-creation deludes one like the mirage. *Avidyā*, *saṃsrṣṭi*, *bandha*, *māyā*, *moha* and *mahat-tama* are but synonyms (11-20). The *drśya* is the *jagat*, *tvam*, *aham* notions all of which are false—*mithyātmā*. So long as these persist, *mokṣa* is impossible. All

the worldly objects are so many reflections in the Self or *cit* and are to be simply wiped off as the reflections in a mirror. If the world, *drśya* ever existed it could never cease to be and whatever has no existence can never exist (26-31). The idea of the *drśya-drśyadhī*—exists in the Self as the scent in camphor, or fragrance in a flower, oil in sesamum. The *citta* itself is thus the ultimate and the only cause of the *bandha* and hence needs the best attention. The *citta-vikalpa* is the terrifying monster for the Self. In all this discussion the Śāṅkara Vedānta tone of the discussion is too obvious to need any comments.

III. Canto 3 again deals with the same topic in almost identical words. In fact the verses 1.46 and 3.38 are identical. All creation is purely mental. Mind is really Brahman. The original mind, Brahman, has no activity like the *smṛti* etc. as it has no previous *karman* and so it has only the *ativāhika* body while all the other minds are endowed with a twofold body, the *ādhibhautika* as well as the *ativāhika*. The beings possess the two bodies while Brahman possesses only one. There is nothing like causation; this is the truth but even if the causation is accepted, the cause and its effect resemble each other and so the world is just like the Brahman, its cause (7, 8, 25-28). It is the mind which creates the false river like the mirage or the *samkalpa-nagara* or the *gandharvanagara*. The *ādhibhautikatā* itself has no existence like the serpentness—*bhujamgatā*—in a rope (30, 31). Brahman becomes mind and then spreads the universe (29). Thus the mind is the cause of the *bandha* and hence deserves to be arrested.

IV. Canto 38 in poetic prose discusses the importance of the mind as the real *karṇ* and the *citta* as the source of the *samsāra*. The mind of the *jñānin* always is in the *turiya* state and is beyond *ānanda* as well as absence of *ānanda*. To those whose mind is attached to the *samsāra* there is no *mokṣa*. There is no *bandha* as there is no *mokṣa* also. Non-awakening causes misery while awakening melts it altogether (22). The Gauḍapādīya influence is again obvious not only in the ideas but also in the identical verse 22. In the Upaniṣadic strain the *ātman* is declared to be non-agent (*akartā*), and non-enjoyer (*abhoktā*). It is said that its *karṇtva* is superimposed (2, 18). The Śāṅkara conception of *adhyāropa* is clearly mentioned in verse 18 where the word *adhyāropa* itself occurs. It is indeed surprising to find Dr. Atreya remarking that the V.R. does not know and does not use

the too well known Śaṅkara terminology of *ādhyāropa* and *adhyāsa*.

All these passages clearly reveal the V.R. idealistic viewpoint that all creation is of the mind and, therefore, false. Bondage is nothing but functioning of the mind. Naturally *mokṣa* would mean cessation of the functioning of the mind. Philosophical conceptions like these bring idealistic philosophy of the V.R. dangerously near the Vedānta of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara.

MOKṢA

V. Canto 72 describes the *mokṣa-svarūpa*. A person who is in possession of the superior knowledge—*samyagjñāna*—is never open to the evils of life (32). The *drśya-darśana-saṁbandha* remains the same for the learned, philosophically wise and for the fool as well; but to the first it gives *mokṣa* while to the latter it gives *samsāra* (34). Brahman is nothing but the experience of the highest happiness (34). *Bandha* is nothing but being caught in the *drśya-darśana-saṁbandha* in the ordinary sense and *mokṣa* is nothing but the freedom from the same (36). *Mokṣa* is simply the realisation of the Self, the *ātman*, which is described in the Upaniṣadic mystic manner (40-45). All worldly experience is false and not in itself real, is the argument in verses 1-16. Untruth is after all untruth and Truth would have been truth had it an existence. The ultimate and higher Truth is that both Truth and Untruth are on this count Untruth (31). *Mokṣa* is the realisation of this Truth.

Vib. Canto 38 attempts a description of the *nirvāṇa*, a philosophical synonym of *mokṣa*. The metaphysical viewpoint here is in fact very much the same as that advocated in canto V. 72. *Brahmasattā* is *śūnya* and has spread everywhere. *Brahmasarga* and the *cittasarga* are indeed similar as both have no existence and for this reason to the author of the V.R. the Bāhyārthavādins and the Vijñānavādins of the Buddhists are but holding identical views. The V.R. holds that all is Brahman spread everywhere (2, 5). Duality does not exist for one who has realized the Self (25). There is nothing like birth or death and even the false mirage does not exist but even this fact requires an examination, till then the falsity is not understood. *Nirvāṇa* is no new state to be realized. When the Self like the lamp extinguished is extinguished in itself with the cessation of the activity of mind and with a detached and disinterested attitude towards the *drśya*, then only it

crosses the ocean of life. *Nirvāṇa* is peace realized in the Self (29-32). The ideal Self is like the Sky—all peace. When the *ahamartha* does not exist, it is clear that the *jagat* or the *samsrṣṭi* also does not exist (34, 40, 41, 42). In *mokṣa* or *nirvāṇa* condition all the *vāsanās*, desires, and the mind do not exist. In all this discussion the very close similarity between these views and the views of the Vedānta of Gauḍapāda or Śaṅkara is too strong to escape notice. The *mokṣa* or the *nirvāṇa* conception also is similar to the one found in Buddhistic philosophy. But the *nirvāṇa* is again linked with the doctrine of the *karmayoga* as, since all is Śiva, all the actions are also *śivarūpa* and therefore need not be shunned altogether (37). Here the influence of the Bhagavadgītā is obvious. The *nirvāṇa* is then the undisturbed peace of the soul realized in the Self and which does not obstruct the normal activity.

VIb. Canto 42 again takes up the description of the *nirvāṇa*. *Nirvāṇa* is nothing but the extinction of the *cittadīpa* (2). The usual V.R. thought that it is the *aviveka* that makes the universe as appearing and evanescent but really speaking from a higher point of view the universe is eternal, it being Brahman and nothing else (8, 20). When the Self is realized the ordinary worships of Rudra, Upendra, etc. lose all significance (30) as *ātman* is the Highest Lord who grants *mokṣa* immediately (31). Appearance is mere cognition and the world is nothing but this cognition and these cognitions cease when the Self is understood. This condition is *nirvāṇa* (40). The famous dream analogy appears in canto 47 where the world is said to be the *prabuddha*, a dream and nothing else. The *nirvāṇa* is defined in canto 51.

VIb. Canto 53 also deals with the same topic. The *mahācit* is the only reality and everything else does not simply exist. When the mind does not work the *cit* appears. It is *aspaṇḍī manorūpa* (12). The logic of Gauḍapāda and Nāgārjuna appears in verses 14-17 where the very phenomenon of causation is denied and the *ajātivāda* is accepted. Verse 20 clearly reveals the Upaniṣadic trend of thought but developed under the Buddhistic influence. The *nirvāṇa* is the realisation of the absolute peace with the full understanding of the *ajātivāda*.

VIb. Canto 72 describes the *nirvāṇa* practically in identical words. The *ajātivāda* is referred to in verse 26 while the *mokṣa* is defined as the cessation of all the *vāsanās* in verse 22. The perception of the world

is like the perception of the *saṁkalpa-nagara* (19). The *mukta* is a *śānta-aśeṣa-viśeṣa*. The *jagat* is identical with the *cidākāśa* which is *śūnya*, *acca* and *nirāmaya*.

Vib. Canto 143 deals with the topic of *nirvāṇa*. The *nirvāṇa* condition is the *pāṇḍitya* on account of the *bodha*, a condition, the grandeur of which far surpasses that of the King of the gods, Indra (2). On account of the *bodha*, *dṛśya* which is *avidyātmā* becomes Brahman; the nature bestowed on it by ignorance disappears as the serpent-hood on the rope disappears (5). The world experience is just like the dream experience and the usual *rajjubhujaga* analogy is used in verse 33. *Dharma-adharma*, *vāsanā*, *karmātmā jīva* are all synonyms and are in fact mere ideas and these have no ultimate existence. The idealistic tone of the discussion is in keeping with that of the other passages which discuss the same topic.

Vib. Canto 161 deals with the description of *nirvāṇa*. The universe is as usual described as whirls in the Lord, the ocean and the *cit-vyoma* is declared to be the Ultimate Reality. To the ignorant, world-appearance, though of the nature of mere space, does not cease to be, as to a man suffering from the eye-disease, the defective perception of the moon, though false, does not cease (17). The *jāgrat* experience is again compared to the dream-experience (22). The entire discussion of the *sādharmya* between the *jāgrat* and the *svapna* as it occurs in verses 22-31 is highly reminiscent of Gauḍapāda. This is further corroborated by the very frank déclaration that there is nothing like *bandha* and *mokṣa* or *vidyā* and *avidyā* (37, 38). Perhaps through Gauḍapāda one may trace the influence of Buddhistic idealism yet the Vedāntic inclinations of the V.R. are clearly proved by the verses 44 and 45 where the famous *brahma kham* and *neti neti* are referred to and finally Brahman is accepted as the Ultimate Reality.

Vib. Canto 174 deals with the same topic again with almost identical phrases. The creations are declared to be the waves on the ocean Brahman (2) and the *sādharmya* with dreams is again emphasised (5, 6). The *mokṣa* or *nirvāṇa* is defined in verse 15 as *turiya* where all the activities, desires, *vāsanās* etc. completely cease. The *nirvāṇa* is the *śīmānta* of all *sat* and *aśat*, a condition where diversity as well as unity do not exist. *Nirvāṇa* is the destruction of the illusion, *bhrānti* and it can be effected only by a careful reading of the *śāstras* which

give the philosophical wisdom. *Tapa* and other recognised methods like the *tīrthayātrā* etc. cannot give this *mokṣa* which can be secured only through *jñāna* (26, 27).

Vib. Canto 203 describes very succinctly the *nirvāṇa* bestowed on Rāma by the teaching of his *guru* Vasiṣṭha and this *nirvāṇa* takes the form of the realisation as declared in *nirvāṇosmi praśāntosmi nākāṁkṣā mama vidyate* (50).

A critical study of all these passages which deal with the conception of *mokṣa* or *nirvāṇa* clearly reveals the idealistic trend of the philosophy of the V.R. The influence of Nāgārjuna and Gauḍapāda is obvious and unmistakable. The reduction of the world-experience to dream condition, denial of causation, acceptance of *ajātivāda* and finally denial of *bandha* and *mokṣa* are the points of contact of the V.R. and the teachings of Nāgārjuna, Gauḍapāda and Śaṁkara. The importance given to *jñāna*, acceptance of *ātman* and Brahman, however, are indications of the Upaniṣadic influence on the idealism of the V.R. It is to be noted that in these passages, influence of Gauḍapāda is to be traced in thought and words perhaps much in the same manner as the influence of Bhagavadgītā is to be traced elsewhere,—a fact which may be a pointer regarding the source of these ideas. It is significant that it is the conception of *mokṣa* that is really responsible for the doctrine of the *jīvanmukta* as it is found in the V.R. It will be seen that the *jīvanmukta* of the V.R. shares these very philosophical views about the world and the *mokṣa* as explained in these passages, a fact which may point out to the same hand being responsible for the two conceptions, to the composite authorship of the text in its present form.

MUKTA

Liberation is the ultimate object of all philosophical effort and inquiry. It is therefore very natural that the works which profess to give *samyag-jñāna* should also describe the very alluring condition of the promised state. The *mukta* condition or in other words the Ideal wise man is a theme on which the author of the V.R. loves to dwell constantly perhaps just as the author of the BG. loves to dwell on the topic of the wise man with steady-intellect, the *sthita-prajña*.

Yet the peculiar point about the discussion of the V.R. is that it primarily refers to the *jīvanmukta*. According to the V.R., *mukti* or

liberation is possible in this very life and it is not a condition to be secured after death. It may be said that of all the Sanskrit philosophical works it is the V.R. which deals with this *jīvanmukta* condition with so much emphasis and enthusiasm. Almost in every *prakaraṇa* the topic is again and again referred to and Rāma is asked to aspire for that ideal condition. A reference to the following places gives a complete idea of what the V.R. has to say in this context and also helps to give an idea of the doctrine of the *jīvanmukta* as contemplated by it.

IV. Canto 46 is devoted to the description of a *jīvanmukta* as the word *jīvanmukta* itself occurring in verse 25 indicates. The entire discussion here reminds one strongly of the *sthita-prajña* of the BG. and this is corroborated by the fact that V.16 comes straightaway from the BG. and many other verses simply paraphrase the BG. ideas in the usual poetical manner. V. Canto 28 deserves notice as it hails from the Kaṭhapaniṣad. It is to be noted that while explaining the character and nature of the Universe the famous Vedānta analogies, *indrajāla*, *gandharvanagara*, *mṛgatṛṣṇikā*, *mohamāyā* are used and this clearly reveals the relation of the V.R. idealism to the Śāṅkara Vedānta. The wise man is defined in verse 8. *Avidyā* being itself unreal cannot affect the wise man (12). He realizes oneness with the Universe (13). He is completely disinterested in everything and has no thought of the desirable and the undesirable. In his case truly the *prajña* has overcome the *vāsanās* and conquered them and he has thus the supreme internal peace in him (32).

V. Canto 6 deals with the same theme and the canto is particularly interesting inasmuch as it indicates the fusion of the Vedāntic and Buddhistic ideas. Thus the person who is desirous of possessing the *jīvanmukta* condition is without any *vāsanās* and similarly he has to imbibe in himself the various spiritual qualities on which Buddhism lays constant stress (9). He is beyond the 'pairs' and is a very sweet tempered person loved by all. He is in fact 'complete with excellences'—*guṇairāpūrṇa*—and follows a spiritual preceptor who bestows on him philosophical wisdom, *viveka*. In this manner he finally realizes the Self (15). The spiritual qualities ultimately lead one to the perception of one God, the *ātman*, essentially a Vedāntic conception. Thus the Ultimate Reality is Vedāntic.

V. Canto 18 again takes up the discussion of the *jīvanmukta*.

His intelligence—*dhī*—is absolutely at rest and peaceful inwards—*ātmaśīta*—and he fully realizes the evanescent nature of the universe—*bhangurā jāgati sthiti*. He resorts to the conquest of the *vāsanās* (3) and in his case the mental equipoise is never disturbed. The verses with the refrain, 'thus act, O Rāghava, in this world—*evam vihara Rāghava*'—bring out this ideal very clearly and also show a close parallel to and correspondence with the verses from the BG. which describe the *sthitaprajña*. In fact verses 7, 17, 37, 38, 40 without doubt have the BG. II before them. Again we have verse 42 in which context the obvious parallel from the BG. is the famous *samatvaṁ yoga ucyate*. In the case of the *jīvanmukta*, the covering or obstructing limitations of the intellect are broken—*vigata-āvaraṇa-dhī*. But the interesting point to be noted is that if the ethical material hails from the BG., the metaphysical material hails from the Śāṅkara Vedānta. Verses 27, 28, 30 as well as the idea that there is nothing like *mokṣa* (29) clearly reveal this fact. This description is a very clear evidence of the deliberate blending of the Activitistic philosophy of the BG. with the Vedāntic or Buddhistic spiritual attitude.

V. Canto 75 is very interesting as it throws light on the doctrine of *jīvanmukta*. The various illustrious *jīvanmuktas* who are referred to are Janaka, Dilīpa, Manu, Māndhātṛ, Bali, Namuci, Prahlāda, Śaṁbara, Agni, Candra, Bṛhaspati, Śukra, Vāyu, Brahmā, Hari, Śiva, Gaurī, Guha, Bhṛṅgiśa, Nārada, Viśvāmitra and Yama. These various references are important as these refer to mythological incidents and reveal the contact as well as close acquaintance of the V.R. with the Purāṇas. At the same time it is well worth noticing that the usual metaphysical analogies do occur here too. Thus in verse 39, the *śaśaśṛṅga* idea appears. Verse 88 with its reference to *śūnya dhyānayoga* has a Buddhistic flavour about it. As usual, *samatā* is recommended (42). The Upaniṣadic *ātman*, a principle which differentiates Śāṅkara Vedānta from Buddhistic philosophy is admitted. The *jīvanmukta* is very succinctly defined in verse 52.

V. Canto 77 again takes up the same topic of *jīvanmukta* for discussion and very frankly opens in the manner of the BG. Here are verses which echo the Bhagavadgītā ideas and phrases (12, 18, 21) and actually with the BG. phrases state the *karmayoga* philosophy. A very important point to be noted in this discussion is the very keen interest in life that the *jīvanmukta* is asked to take in this world. He

is not a cold perfect saint turning his back on this world with his superior philosophical wisdom but takes interest in life responding properly to the various situations (14). What really matters is the supreme internal peace which he has made his own once for all (17). Since he is beyond anger and other passions his actions do not bind him.

VIa. Canto 11 discusses the same topic in rather greater details and perhaps with greater warmth. It resembles more V. Canto 75 as the various *jīvanmuktas*—Janaka, Hari, Śambhu, Brahmā, Bṛhaspati, Śukra, Sūrya, Candra, Vāyu, Nārada, Vasiṣṭha, Aṅgiras, Atri, Śuka, Pracetas and Bhṛgu are referred to. Perhaps greater importance is to be attached to the metaphysical views believed to be held by these *jīvanmuktas*. The Upaniṣadic content of the highest knowledge is very clearly reflected in verses 92-100. *Ātman* so frequently described in the Upaniṣads as the Highest Reality is accepted as such by the *jīvanmuktas* also. Similarly verses 16-56 are nothing but a very eloquent exposition of the Upaniṣadic observation—*sarvaṁ khalu idaṁ brahma*. This Brahman is pure bliss (32). The *drṣṭāntas* cited in order to explain the relation of the Reality and the World are the usual Vedāntic ones, the ornaments and gold, water and whirls, and the ocean and waves (30). Verses 39, 40 remind one of the Śāṅkarabhāṣya on BS. II.I.13 as the *mahā-samudra-sthānīyatā* of Brahman is described in both the places. Duality is condemned as false (42). The author of the V.R. always has the Upaniṣads as well as the BG. before him and this is proved here too by the occurrence of the refrain *brahma brahma-vido viduḥ*. The Upaniṣadic *aham brahmāsmi* is directly referred to in verse 56 and the point made out is that *nānātva* is false, all the world is pure bliss being nothing else than Brahman which itself is *ānanda*. The Upaniṣadic character of all this discussion is too obvious. Verse 1 has the BG. as the basis as also 7, 20, 21. These not only reveal the textual relation of the BG. and the V.R. but also the ideological relation between the *sthitaprajña* and the *jīvanmukta*.

VIa. Canto 104 describes the *jīvanmukta* in the usual terms but in 41 and 42 makes an observation regarding the relation of the *vyavahāra* and the *jīvanmukta*, saying he faces life bravely.

VIIb. Canto 125 again discusses the *jīvanmukta*, the ideal of the author. Here too the BG. background is too obvious to escape the

attention of a critical reader as the verses 46 and 49 would show. The list of the *jīvanmuktas*, Janārdana, Hari, Sūrya, Candra, Hara, Agni, Janaka, Māndhātṛ, Nala occurs here as well. It is interesting to note that the mythological story of Brahmā's fifth head being cut off by Hara is narrated in 45. If such allusions reveal the Paurāṇic background of these discussions the Vedāntic background of the same is revealed by the conception of *mokṣa* as a property of the *cetas* (30,33). The *jīvanmukta* is defined in 35. The verse 61 again declares that the *vāsanā* is the cause of bondage. From the metaphysical standpoint the analogies of the Rainbow (65), the Pillar and the Doll (69) deserve notice as these affirm oneness and denounce duality.

VIb. Canto 199 takes up the discussion of the liberated, and Vasiṣṭha explains as to why the *muktas* do not abandon action. In the case of the *mukta* the question of acceptance or rejection is really beside the point (2). To think of abandoning *kriyā* with the rise of knowledge is to lose one's bearing in life (28). Renunciation does not lead one anywhere (29, 33). Detached mind is the key to realize *mokṣa* (32). When the *sāmya* is realized the *mukta* lives happily in a pure blissful state like the sky—*para-ākāśa*. Verses 11, 28, 31 show the Bhagavadgītā contact.

JÑĀNA

II. Canto 10 gives the origin of *jñāna* that saves a man. The creator created the various methods of leading religious life like the *tapas*, *dharma*, *dāna*, *satya*, *tīrthas*, etc. and for the sake of the salvation of man created *jñāna* and wished the same to be handed to man through generations through Vasiṣṭha (19, 21, 40, 41).

III. Canto 22 discusses the *viññāna*. It refers to the *ativāhika* body which is the ultimate to be reached and explains the false character of the *ādhibhautika*—the *jāgrat-deha* (1, 2). The discussion has a reference to the seven *ajñānabhūmikās* discussed elsewhere. *Suṣupti* is *suptavāsanā* while the *turiya* is *prakṣiṇavāsanā* and is therefore the state of the *jīvanmukta* who realizes the pure *sattāsāmānya*. *Jñāna* is here clearly defined as the knowledge that the *dṛśya* is a mere fiction, an impossibility. This is the *jñeya*. When this is completely realized through repeated practice, one easily reaches the *nirvāṇa* (31).

Realisation of *jñāna* also has its seven *bhūmikās* or steps on going beyond which *mukti* is attained. These seven stages are discussed

in III. Canto 118 as the counterpart of the seven stages of the *avidyā* discussed in the previous chapter (117). *Śubhecchā*, *vicāraṇā*, *tanumānasā*, *sattvāpatti*, *asaṃsakti*, *padārthābhāvanī* and *turyagā* are the seven stages and these are defined as follows. The feeling that one is a fool and should seek right instruction from the *śāstras* and the wise, this desire is the *śubhecchā* while the tendency towards virtuous behaviour on account of this association with the wise and the *śāstras* and *vairāgya* is the *vicāraṇā*. *Tanumānasā* is the further result of the *vicāraṇā*, its nature being the non-attachment to the senses and their objects. When by a constant practice of these three *bhūmikās* one remains or comes to stay in the pure self the state is called *sattvāpatti*. A mastery over these four states results in the realisation of the fifth, the *asaṃsakti*, non-attachment; for one is then firmly stationed in the self and when one is so firmly fixed in the Self naturally one comes to ignore or not to perceive the external *padārthas* or objects and so the sixth condition is realized. When the external and the internal objects are so negated, one comes to stay in one's natural state, the state of pure Self, the *turīya*—*svabhāvaikaṇiṣṭhā*—and this is the condition of the Self or the *jīvanmuktas* who in the state of their existence are always in the state of Self and are not disturbed by the world. Brahman is beyond the seven states and is the object of the *videhamukti*. Beasts and evil-minded persons like the *mlecchas* are not capable of these seven stages but it is these that lead one to salvation. *Jñapti* or knowledge is the destruction of bonds (7-15, 23). The doctrine of the *jñānabhūmikās* is an important contribution of the V.R.; for though the material is old enough, for these are nothing but the *sādhana-catustaya* of the Vedānta and offer a ladder of the spiritual progress of the *jñānins* yet the presentation is new as well lucid and interesting.

V. Canto 29 describes Bali in possession of the *vijñāna* and it is the knowledge of the reality of the Self. He has no desires for enjoyments, his mind is thoroughly steadied and he has stationed himself in the Self and found delight therein. The influence of the BG. on this particular chapter is obvious from the verses 39, 47 etc. Death and birth are but a *bhrānti*, an illusory notion.

V. Canto 40 gives the instruction of *bhagavān* Nārāyaṇa to Prahlāda and it also touches upon these very doctrines. The final and eternal peace, *śānti*, arises only when the subject object relation ceases to exist, *grāhyagrāhakabhāva* must become *kṣīṇa* (19). To the Self

do not belong either the *kartṛtva* or the *bhokṛtva*. The importance of the *susṛipti* as the ideal stage for *vyavahāra* is brought out in 20 and 21. This only reveals the consistency of the V.R. teaching.

V. Canto 79 in a clear-cut manner sets about the discussion of right knowledge, *samyag-jñāna*. The right knowledge, the *samyag-jñāna* is described as the belief, realisation that *paramātmān* is the only existing entity and reality, and that nothing else exists. It is wrong perception that leads to the perception of the serpent while the right perception leads to its non-existence; in a similar manner wrong knowledge leads to the notions of birth but right knowledge leads to salvation (4). *Samvit*, pure and without any idea or thought is *paramātmān* and is, therefore, to be realized. This reality being nothing but space; birth, death, bondage and liberation are all false notions. All this is Brahman. The world and its notions should not disturb the *śānti*, peace of the mind, just as gentle breezes do not affect the mountain. These notions arise from the notions of duality etc. and are nothing but like so many waves in water. The *samyag-jñāna*, therefore, is that the universe is the Self and there is no *avidyā*, the mother of the universe (19).

VIa. Canto 9 is interesting as in a highly idealistic tone it makes *vidyā* as relative to *avidyā* and in a final analysis of things negatives both (20). *Avidyā* certainly does not exist and for the same reason the *vidyā* also does not exist. To think of *vidyā* for the destruction of the non-existing *avidyā* is to think of weapons for the murder of a *vandhyā-putra*. The highest knowledge is that there is no knowledge. All is *samvit*, pure Self, on which both the *vidyā* and *avidyā* are bubbles.

VIa. Canto 13 is interesting as it closely follows the BG. not only in thought but in phrases also in identifying *jñāna* and *yoga*. *Yoga* is defined as a remedy that helps one to cross the *samsāra*. *Ātmajñāna* and *prāṇasaṁrodha* are but the two varieties of this *yoga*. Though both these are really *yoga* yet by usage the word *yoga* has been fixed to express *prāṇa-yukti* only. But contrary to the conclusion of BG. the V.R. declares that the *jñānaniścaya* is *susādhya*, easy to attain while the *yoga* on account of the *dhāraṇā*, *āsana* etc. is not easy to master. Just as the conclusion reached here is different from the one of the BG. it is also worth noticing that the word *yoga* is used in the sense of Pātanjala-yoga and not in the wider sense of the BG. though

the wider sense is admitted in the definition of *yoga* as given in (3). Verses 3, 5, 7, 8, 10 deserve comparison with the Bhagavadgītā.

VIa. Canto 54, a part of the BG. incorporated in the V.R., gives the knowledge about the Self. The BG. verses need no effort to be identified yet what deserves notice is the deliberate effort made to make the BG. passages teach the V.R. philosophy. Thus the doctrine that the *ātman* is not the agent is found in both; similarly the advice to ignore the *mātrāsparśas* is given in both but the metaphysical viewpoint here is that the *duḥkha* is due to *bhrānti*, a result of wrong knowledge or absence of knowledge—*abodha*. All the objects are so many *spandas* in Brahman, mere waves in the ocean (16-17). The well known Rajju-Ahi *drṣṭānta* also occurs in verse 14. The *karmayoga* and the *sthita-prajña* passages supply the remaining verses in the chapter. It is obvious that the BG. is being made to fit in the idealistic Vedānta philosophy and there is no doubt that the V.R. is the later.

VIa. Canto 78 gives the knowledge that dawned on Cuḍālā. Realizing the evanescent character of the universe and the objects like *āyu*, *yauvana*, body and the essenceless character of the *vyavahāra* Cuḍālā thinks of the higher knowledge as she knows that the *ātma-jñāna* is the only antidote against the terrible disease of *saṁsāra* or *saṁsṛti*. Discarding the body, the senses and the mind as *jaḍa* things she arrives at the *ātman*, the *jīva*, the *cidrūpa*. She comes to realize that the *buddhi*, *indriyas* and mind etc. are the mere sport of the *cit* and are like the two moons, non-existing. *Mahā-cit*, the *mahāsattā* is the truth and is named as Brahman, *paramātman*. *Jñāna* is finally summarised in 51 which declares that the highest *cit* is *śānta*, *nirālamba* and there is no duality or the notion of first and this or objects. This is the *parama-prabodha*, highest knowledge.

VIa. Canto 87 gives the philosophic instruction given to King Śikhidhvaja. It is declared that *jñāna* is the highest good, *parama śreya*, and *mukti*, *kaivalya* is secured through it (16). It is the *vāsanā* that is responsible for the world and bondage and so *kriyā* and *kriyā-phala* are destroyed when the *vāsanā* itself is destroyed (20). To him who has realized that all is Brahman, Ignorance does not harass and desires do not oppress (25). The *saṁvit* with the desire, *vāsanā*, is the mind while the same without the *vāsanā*, desire is knowledge. The highest knowledge, real philosophic insight can be secured by the

service and learning at the feet of the good and wise (33). Thus it is the *vāsanā* that is the real enemy to be vanquished and *mokṣa* is nothing but the desireless state.

VIa. Cantos 93-101 again describe the instruction given to King Śikhidhvaja this time in greater details. The king has been asked to abandon all desires, *vāsanātyāga* and then is further advised to abandon the *citta* also, for the *cittatyāga* is the *sarvatyāga* (43) for the *citta* is the field for the crop of the world. The mind extinguished is like the lamp without the oil which does not shine but then the Self shines, like the lamp with the oil. The ideal recommended is that of the Śākyamuni who lived stable like the Meru (61). The Buddhistic influence and inclinations cannot be better expressed. *Vāsanā* which is just the other word for the *citta* is to be perfectly controlled. Of the *citta* tree the *aham* idea is the *bija* which therefore is to be thoroughly rooted out. Causation is again denied in the same manner as that of Gauḍapāda (47-58). The importance of *jñāna* that makes even poison as nectar is emphasised (37-96). The world is just like a dream and a false notion (16-98). The Ultimate Reality is all peace like the stone—*pāśāṇa* (30-99). The usual *rajju-sarpa*, *mṛgaṭṛṣṇikā*, *alāta-cakra* analogies are used to explain the phenomenon of perception in chapter 100. The highest *jñāna* is declared to be the complete annihilation of the view of both the *ekatva* and the *dvitva*. This is the highest state—*parama gati*. So long as the mind exists the ignorance exists and when the mind is destroyed as mind, that act itself is the rise of knowledge (19-21, 101). In this manner the highest knowledge that saves a man is of the idealistic Vedānta type yet it recognises the Śākyamuni as the ideal. These facts are clear testimony as to the sources of the V.R. philosophy. The references to the *spanda* and the *citta* doctrine would indicate the uniform nature of the instruction. A reference to the canto 111 which again gives the instruction to Kāca will reveal the same truth; for here too the ultimate goal is the destruction of the *citta* and the same *vivarta dṛṣṭāntas* are referred to in verses 33-38. The doctrine of *ajātivāda* is the one which is clearly favoured by the V.R. That is the *jñāna* to be possessed. Canto 114 states the instruction of the highest reality, *upadeśa* about the *parama artha*. Here too the *rajju-bhujaṅga*, *kanaka-keyūra*, *salila-taraṅga*, fire and flame analogies occur to explain the origin of the universe. The Ultimate Reality is the pure *saṃvit* and the *dṛśya* is all unreality. All this

is pure *saṁvīt* and there is no diversity. In canto 122 which gives the instruction to Ikṣvāku it is declared that it is the *aham* idea—*bhrānti*—that leads to bondage and it is the *jñāna* that secures the salvation (12).

Vib. Canto 21 is interesting as it distinguishes between the real *jñānins* and the *jñānabandhus*, between men of knowledge and men who have merely verbal knowledge which does them no good, who follow the '*pravṛtti lakṣaṇa dharma*'. *Jñāna* is very near to him but he is not in possession of the same. *Jñānabandhus* are those who are satisfied with the mere appearance of knowledge, howsoever little, and stop short of *ātma-jñāna*, satisfied without getting it.

Vib. Canto 101 gives the highest instruction and the *ajātivāda* and affirms the existence of the pure *saṁvīt* as the only Ultimate Reality (29). Canto 150 again touches the same matter and offers the same conclusion (14-18).

All these various chapters make it clear that the V.R. is no doubt under the influence of the idealistic Vedānta of the type of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara. Not only does it accept that *jñāna* leads to salvation but the content of *jñāna* is also the same as that accepted by these two thinkers.

KARMAN

The V.R. in the very first canto of the first Book poses the question as to whether it is *karman* or *jñāna* that leads to salvation (5-16). The view that is expressed by Agastī is the one which is given in the Hārīta-smṛti, that *karman* and *jñāna* are like the two wings of a bird and hence both are necessary for spiritual progress. The usual *dviṣṭhā* *niṣṭhā*, *pravṛtti* and *tyāga* are referred to in verse 15 and both the ways are described as advised by the Śrutis. The verse 15 is interesting as it points to the Upaniṣadic and the BG. background of the entire discussion of the V.R. The V.R. instruction of Vasiṣṭha to Rāma is an attempt to solve this very difficult problem of *karman*. If anything, the trend of the opening of the V.R. is clearly in favour of the performance of the *karmas* and towards a combination, *samuccaya* of *jñāna* and action.

II. Canto 9 is devoted to the discussion of *karman*. Action is in fact nothing but the desire of the mind transformed into effort (13). The *daiva* is again nothing but the previous actions (16). As a matter

of fact, *daiva*, *pauruṣa*, *vāsanā*, *citta* and *manas* are all synonyms. *Śubha* or *aśubha* depends on one's action and good desires are the good actions and really constitute the effort, the *pauruṣa* of man. It is with the help of such effort that the *daiva* though *aśubha* can be overcome and defeated. The conquest of the senses also requires effort, *karman* and, therefore, one has to work hard, that is action is not to be abandoned but the right type of *pauruṣa* is to be resorted to with all the means and strength possible.

III. Canto 95 discusses the identity of the *puruṣa* and the *karman*. As a matter of fact the *puruṣa* and the *karman*, the agent and the action are identical both being put forth by the Highest simultaneously just as the tree puts forth the flower and its fragrance (1). *Ajātivāda* is the highest truth and therefore there is nothing like any action or agent. The Highest does nothing (3-6). The simile of the flower and the fragrance is again given in verse 12 to illustrate the oneness of the *pumān* and *karman*. With the rise of the mind, comes into existence the *karman* and the *jīva* too. *Karman* and mind are not different. It is the *kriyāspanda* that is described as *karman*. When *karman* is destroyed and *akarmatā*, inaction, is but the destruction of the mind. *Citta* and *karman* are so intimately related to each other almost like the fire and its warmth, that with the disappearance of one of them, both consequently disappear. *Citta* moving, is in fact *karman*. So if one aims at destruction of *karman* it is the *citta* that is to be destroyed (34-38).

VIb. Canto 2 opens almost in the manner of the BG. since Rāma asks Vasiṣṭha to explain as to which is the better, the *karma-tyāga* or *karma-anuṣṭhāna* and what are the good results of the latter and the evil effects of the former. The argument for the performance of the *karmas* sounds ridiculous in case the unreality of *aham* is accepted. Rāma in a very fine *rūpaka*—metaphor—describes the body as the *karman*-tree in the forest of *saṃsāra*, with *karman* as the *bīja*, pleasure and pain as the fruit, old age as the flower, the senses of actions as the roots etc. *Vedana* is the *bīja*, the seed of all actions (26). So this *karman* is to be destroyed. But Vasiṣṭha in his reply points out that *karman* is identical with the *citta* and *citta* cannot be abandoned so long as there is body; hence *karman* also cannot be abandoned till then (35). *Karma-tyāga* is an impossibility and one who abandons *karman* simply abandons his duty. *Tyāga* is possible only after the rise of

jñāna, the realisation that the *dṛśya* does not exist. The root of all *karmas* is the *saṁvit* of the mind which is of the essence of desires, the *vāsanās* and so long as the body lasts the destruction of these is impossible (43). The *citta*, however, can be destroyed through *jñāna* and then only *karmanāśa* is possible. Therefore it is the destruction of the mind full of all kinds of desires that is to be destroyed. It is in this context that the positions of the V.R. and the BG. become almost identical. Both accept the impossibility of total renunciation of the action and so both aim at the purification of the mind, in other words, destruction of the mind through annihilation of the desires. In a sense the *cittanāśa* of the V.R. and the *karmaphalatyaṅga* of the BG. are ultimately the same.

The whole of the BG. is renarrated in VIa.Cantos 52-58 and it is clear that the BG. is made to teach the V.R. philosophy. The argument in favour of *karman*, the *karmayoga* is accepted (53.16). *Sannyāsa* and *asaṁsanga* are distinguished and defined in 53.30, 31. Many of the Bhagavadgītā verses referring to the non-agency of the Self and wise man's being beyond the *karma* and *akarma* and having nothing to gain, are taken and used, ad verbatim. Ultimately the same solution of *vāsanābījakṣya* is recommended (57.11). Thus in brief it can be stated that the V.R. attitude towards *karman* is the same as that of the Bhagavadgītā. The *jīvanmukta* and the *sthitaprajña* both perform actions in the same spirit.

YOGA

V. Canto 78 discusses *yoga* as a method useful for destroying the *citta*, the cause of both the *avidyā* and the universe. The *citta-spanda*, the movement of the mind, is the cause of the perception of the non-existing universe as the movement of the firebrand, *alātacakraspanda* is the cause of the perception of the circle which does not exist. Hence the ultimate problem is that of arresting the movement or the *spanda* of the *citta*; but in reality the *spanda* and the *citta* are not two different or independent things, the *spanda* and the *citta* are related with each other as the whiteness and snow, sesamum and oil, fire and heat or flower and its fragrance (1-7). The destruction of the *citta* or arresting of the mind can be effected through two ways, the *jñāna* and the *yoga*, where *jñāna* means 'correct perception' *samyag avekṣaṇa* and *yoga* is the arresting of the functions of the mind, *tadvṛttinirodha* (8). The *vāyu* that moves through the *nāḍīs* in the body

is the *prāṇa* and the same *prāṇa* on account of its diverse functions and movements has been given the names like *apāna* etc. Where the inner *prāṇa* moves, a *saṁvit* capable of thought is produced and this is the *citta* that is to be controlled. From *prāṇaspanda* the *cit-spanda* and from it the *saṁvit* is produced like the waves in water by internal movement. *Citta* thus is nothing but *prāṇaspanda* and so when the *prāṇa* is controlled the *citta* is naturally controlled and the mind destroyed, and the *saṁsāra* vanishes. The fact that the *prāṇa* is of the nature of *vāyu* and therefore *sadāgati*, creates no difficulties in its being controlled. The *pūraka*, *kumbhaka* and *recaka* order enables one to achieve the control. Company of the good and a study of the *śāstras*, *vairāgya*, *dhyāna* and constant practice in solitude; utterance of the *omkāra* and realisation of its last *mātrā*; a perfect control over the *recaka*, the *pūraka* and the *kumbhaka*; all these enable one to arrest the *prāṇaspanda* and destroy the *citta*. Similarly when the *prāṇa* is made to reach the *ūrdhvarandhra* beyond the *tālu* or when the *saṁvit* is made to merge in space at some twelve fingers distance in front of the tip of the nose, the *prāṇaspanda* is arrested and the *citta* is destroyed. Again *prāṇaspanda* is arrested and the *citta* is destroyed when the *prāṇa* reaches through the *ūrdhvarandhra*, the *brahmarandhra*, beyond the *tālu* or when the pure space is realized and the mind, pure without any desires, has become one with it. The entire discussion in verses 18-31 is closely based on the *yoga* of Patañjali. It is surprising to read Dr. Dasgupta remarking that the V.R. *yoga* is not the Pātañjalayoga. This type of *yoga* no doubt was favoured even by the *jñānins* ever since the times of the Upaniṣads as the Kaṭha indicates and the same was admitted by the BG. also. But the V.R. clearly reveals the *yoga* fully developed and it is also clear that the V.R. is fully acquainted with all the niceties and the complications of the Pātañjalayoga. The heart of the beings is described as being twofold, *upādeya*, the *saṁvit*-heart pervading almost every part of the body in a mysterious manner and the *heya*, the usual heart in the bosom (32-35). Practice of *yoga* gives one control over the *prāṇa* and naturally over the *citta* and finally when all the *saṁkalpas* are thus brought under complete control *jīvanmukti* is realised (54).

ŚĀSTRA

The *śāstra* plays a very important part in the philosophy of the V.R. as it is recognised as a sure and preliminary means of securing

right knowledge. *Ātmajñāna* is the result of the knowledge of the meaning of the *śāstras* and also of the meditation of the *mahāvākyas* of the Upaniṣads, *śāstrārtha-vedana* and *mahāvākyārtha-saṁsiddha* (II. 2-19). The *śāstra* is always for the knowledge, and realisation of the *ātman* (7) and the V.R. is the best among the histories, *itihāsoṭtama*, the essence of the histories, and its knowledge bestows *jīvan-mukti* on the student. Just as an excellent medicine gives perfect health and freedom from disease, in a similar manner the *śāstra* gives right spiritual insight and freedom from ignorance (III. 8.7-15). The *adhyātmaśāstra* in general and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in particular is again praised in VIb. 163 as a *śāstra* that secures salvation by teaching the right attitude and by imparting right instruction. A very important as well as interesting discussion about the importance of the *śāstras* in granting release is as follows : The *śāstra* is like a forest and men are like the *kīrakas*, poor foresters who maintain themselves by cutting wood and selling it. These foresters enter a forest which is full of wood and wealth of all type, *candana* trees, jewels etc. and even the *cintāmaṇi* is there. Some men take only the wood and anyhow live; while others better gifted go after the higher things and live happily; while those fortunate ones who come by the *cintāmaṇi* are the best among them all, as they have all the desires fulfilled and have the things at their feet. Thus men who enter the forest only to find out a means for bare livelihood finally obtain the means of all prosperity and happiness. In a similar manner men who approach the *śāstras* with the ordinary desire of winning happiness ultimately win release (5). The *śāstras* expressly deal with the three *vargas*, the three primary ends of life, *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* but the fourth, the *brahmaprāpti*, is the suggested meaning of the *śāstras*. It is the *dhvani*, the *vyaṅgya* to put it in the manner of the *ālaṁkārikas*. The *śāstras* make man pure; and the coming together of a *mumukṣu* and the *śāstras* ultimately results in the *ātmajñāna*. The light requires the wall for being perceived; so the contact of the *śrutis* and the *śrutavat* is necessary for the realisation of the *ātmajñāna* (VIb. 196-7). For all these reasons the study of the *śāstras* though not directly leading to *mokṣa* is recommended.

DAIVA

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa treats the very important concept of *daiva* in a very interesting manner. The main purpose obviously is to

dispel the gloom of fatalism from the human mind. The doctrine of *karman* and the idea of *daiva* leave very little room for will and ultimately lead to a doctrine of gloom, despondency and finally fatalism which prevents a man from making effort towards the betterment of his condition. It produces a peculiar sort of perverted contentment which makes a man accept his condition howsoever bad and loathsome as a divine dispensation, a state of affairs ordained by fate or *daiva*.

I. Canto 55 describes the evils of *daiva* as seen by Rāma. A very gloomy picture of life in general is presented here. When the Gods and the mountains, stars and the oceans, all have to abide by destiny or *daiva* and be not one day, the utter insignificance of human aspirations, joys and others becomes too apparent. The consideration of the *daiva* only produces disgust in the minds of the wise. In a vigorous reply this argument of the fatalists, is taken up for discussion in II. 4-8. *Pauruṣa* which the V.R. recommends is nothing but the human energy and effort directed towards the attainment of the desired object. Chapters 6 and 7 are specially directed towards the refutation of the very concept of *daiva*. *Daiva* is, in fact nothing but our previous actions, *prākpauruṣa*, and hence can be negated or nullified by our present actions, just as a bad deed performed on a particular day can be nullified and compensated for by a good action on the next, in a similar manner *pauruṣa* can set right the *daiva*, however bad it may be. *Daiva* thus does not bar all path to progress which thus in the main depends on our effort. The struggle always is between two *pauruṣas*, as if between two rams, and the stronger one succeeds. A man going to hell or heaven simply as directed by God is no better than a beast; but a man who by constant good effort strives and follows the *śāstras* etc. goes out of the miseries of life and death like a lion out of a cage. *Pauruṣa* is the right type of scientific action directed towards the objective by a man. This is always stronger than the Previous Action which is *daiva*. If one fails, it only means the weakness of the present *pauruṣa*; and, therefore, by one desirous of success only constant effort is to be resorted to. Fools imagine the *daiva* to be all strong and all the while remaining dependent meet their ruin. The reward of *pauruṣa* is *pratyakṣa* but the *daiva* is only an idea, a *kalpanā* (8). The idea of *daiva* is as wrong as the perception of the *raju-sarpa*. *Spanda* is the activity and it is the activity

that always results in something but inactivity is almost impossible except in a corpse. Intangible, *amūrta daiva* cannot have any association with the *mūrta* man in the matter of producing effects. If after all an idea like the *daiva* is allowed to take so utter a possession of the mind why not allow the idea of *pauruṣa* to do the same? Gods and sages have attained all their greatness by their *pauruṣa* and they never relied on *daiva*. *Daiva* never does anything nor achieves anything. It is nothing but a convenient, ready-made explanation for indolence by fools and ignorant men. *Manas*, *vāsanā*, *pauruṣa*, *karman* and *daiva* all are in fact synonyms. This discussion is very interesting as it is a point of contact of the V.R. and the Mbh. and the passage has been critically discussed before. It is a very clear argument in favour of human effort for spiritual betterment and for final release.

III. Chapter 62 again takes up *daiva* for discussion. *Daiva* in a wider or larger sense is the thought or power of Brahman or *cit* that has preceded the creation (13). *Apauruṣa* is *niyati* while it is the *pauruṣa* that leads to creation. The larger *niyati* has fixed the natures of things and so they will not change; but it is to be remembered that the *pauruṣa* of the creator achieved everything, not the *niyati*. *Niyati* thus finally depends upon effort and hence effort is superior to *daiva*. There would have been no creation had Brahmā or *cit* not resorted to *spanda* or effort. The V.R. does not recognise in life anything like chance. Even a *brahmin* who was made a king by the elephant by putting the garland of election round him was not so made by chance. It is his *pauruṣa* as well the same of his family, ministers and the subjects.

It would thus appear that the V.R. constitutes a real and significant advance over the BG., where though Arjuna is apparently given a choice in 'do as you like' yet the all assertive '*prakṛti* as a force of *niyati*, a force uncontrollable will harness you' is also made quite clear; and hence the naughty problem of freedom of the human will arises while dealing with the BG. philosophy; but the V.R. position is quite clear on this issue. The supremacy of effort is clearly recognised. True in the BG. also for any happening *daiva* is given the last and the fifth place in the famous *daivam caivātra pañcamam*; yet the whole position and trend of the discussion is that things are predestined and men are but *nimittas*—thus the course and result of the war is already determined, Kṛṣṇa has already killed the Kaurava heroes and Arjuna

is to be the *nimitta* only. In this sense the V.R. is definitely more dynamic as it gives a greater scope for human will and admits the possibility of anything being achieved by will and effort. How the V.R. is later than the other Mbh. passage which incorporates an ancient dialogue on this very topic has been already discussed before.

PAURUṢA

It is no exaggeration to say that the whole of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is nothing but a vigorous plea in favour of *pauruṣa*, human effort and straining towards betterment, even perfection. The Bhagavadgītā does not refer to this concept in so many clear-cut words; yet one can understand the germs of that doctrine in the argument for the *karmayoga*. The effect of the *karman* doctrine was disastrous as it led to a gloomy and sad fatalism. The value and importance of effort as such was altogether ignored. The argument in the Bhagavadgītā is more from a social point of view though the observations that *karmatyāga* is not desirable and is almost impossible for the individual, are also to be met with. The V.R. continues to argue in the same strain; yet it is a very vigorous plea. Right from the Creator upto the lowest creature, it is but a case of effort proving more powerful than *daiva*. II. Cantos 4, 5 and 7 set forth this doctrine of *pauruṣa* in a clear-cut manner. There is nothing like *daiva* as it is a mere imagination of fools and *pauruṣa* is but the activity of the mind and the limb in accordance with the instruction of the good. All other activity is the activity of a madman (10, 11-4). It is due to *pauruṣa* that Indra, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva are all *cits*, *puruṣas* that have attained to godhood due to their *pauruṣa* and not by chance. *Pauruṣa* is of two types, the ancient or past-*prāktana* and present *aiihika* and it is the *aiihika* that always is more powerful than the *prāktana*. Efforts well directed and organised can destroy the mount Meru, what to say of past actions (18). The simile of two fighting rams is given to illustrate the fight between the past and the present efforts of a being. It may and does happen that one's *pauruṣa* comes into conflict with the *pauruṣa* of others. The conflict of *ātmīya* and *anyadiya pauruṣa* is also admitted. If the past is very bad it only means that a very strong effort is necessary to overcome the same. *Pauruṣa* is itself of two kinds, one according to the *śāstras* and the other not in conformity with the *śāstras*, *śāstrita* and *ucchāstra* (4). The *ucchāstra pauruṣa*

leads to bad results, *anartha*, while it is only the *śāstrita* that leads to desirable end. Even when a Brahmin, a mere passerby is elected a king by the choice through the elephant it is no case of a mere chance; but it is the case of the *pauruṣa* of the ministers and others making itself felt. Laziness and reliance on *daiva* would reduce the human being to the level of a beast. Thus the importance of effort is obvious and therefore scientific effort is to be directed towards the attainment of the highest good. *Pauruṣa* or the *puruṣārtha* is manifest in three forms, the *spanda* or the activity of the mind, *saṁvit*, and the senses (4-7). Gods and sages like Śukra and others have attained greatness through their effort. The *pauruṣa* succeeds in three ways or on account of three factors, the *śāstra*, the *guru* and the Self. The *śāstras* give the direction about the right objects and the *gurus* advise regarding the right method that is desirable and likely to succeed; while the Self always yearns and in its own way urges one for a greater effort. Even Viṣṇu achieved all the signal success in the matter of creation and in defeating the demons by sheer effort and not through *daiva*. Thus it is the *pauruṣa* that is the real force in life and there is nothing like *daiva*. It is this concept of *pauruṣa* that gives a very dynamic character to the philosophy of the V.R.; and it is therefore that the wise of the V.R. are expected to take part in the normal activity with zeal and enthusiasm. The cold saintly ideal of aloofness is not recommended.

UPADEŚA

What is the teaching of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa? In addition to these various chapters discussing the philosophically important topics we have time and again chapters containing the *upadeśa*—instruction—on the important points. These chapters are II. 21, 67, 102, 115; IV. 45, 47; V. 6, 17, 64 etc. Nothing very new is taught in these chapters but the same instruction outlined in the foregoing sections is repeated. Thus the V.R. idealistic metaphysical outlook is recommended; and side by side is recommended the performance of one's own actions. To sum up, the teaching of the V.R. is the *jñāna-karma samuccaya*, the *jñāna* being of the Śaṅkara Vedānta type, in certain respects. The ideal recommended is that of the *jīvanmukta* person who closely corresponds to the *sthītaprajña* of the BG. But the *jñāna* which the BG. teaches is not the same which the V.R. has in mind.

On the one hand it has the uncompromising—almost Buddhistic idealism so far as the metaphysics is concerned; and on the other hand on the ethical side it recommends the Brahmanical *yoga* and the *sthita-prajña* ideal of the BG. Of course the *yoga* need not be regarded as a purely Brahmanical contribution, for it has been a common treasure of the various philosophical, orthodox as well as unorthodox systems. Nowhere is action condemned in Śaṅkara's manner but it is always linked up with the higher and philosophical viewpoint. In its metaphysics it looks beyond Śaṅkara to Gauḍapāda and perhaps even beyond him, while in its ethics it is satisfied in reiterating the view of the BG. Can this point out, in point of time, a period similar to that of the BG. when the proper relation of the *jñāna* and *karman* had to be expounded? If the post-Buddha period is one such period which heralded the Bhagavadgītā, the post-Śaṅkara period may be the other period which must have ushered in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

THE VAIṢṆAVA, ŚAIVA AND BHĀGAVATA SECTIONS

The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is obviously a work in Vedānta and curiously enough it has some sections in which the Purāṇic gods are accepted as the highest but are shown as teaching the Vedānta philosophy that the text favours. Thus Cantos 30-43 of the fifth Book contain the famous story of Prahlāda, the son of the demon Hiranyakaśipu. The Purāṇic account is too well-known to suffer any narration here; but what is important and interesting is that Lord Nārāyaṇa is made here to teach the idealistic philosophy of the V.R. Verses 30.1-38 narrate the Purāṇic story and in the later portions Prahlāda is taught and so he meditates on the *ātman*, the Brahman and accepts the philosophical viewpoint of the favoured doctrine and is finally at peace within himself. Thus it is shown that even Prahlāda, the favoured of the Lord Nārāyaṇa, also learnt this very doctrine and was saved. This philosophy is real knowledge. Even Prahlāda declares that this *gandharvanagara* spreads out but then disappears when the Highest is seen (36. 70). Nārāyaṇa is described here as Viṣṇu and this may be regarded as an attempt to show that even Viṣṇu taught this very doctrine, it being the only correct view.

VIa. Cantos 30-42 are sections which may be regarded as Śaiva in character and in spirit. The *ākhyāna* is called as the Śivapūjā-ākhyāna. Vasiṣṭha gives here the philosophy taught to him by Lord

Śiva. In chapters that follow it is the philosophy of the V.R., that Śiva is made to teach. Śiva uses the *salila-taraṅga*, the *śaśa-śṛṅga*, *vetāla* analogies and speaks of Śūnya, Brahmā, Śiva and Īśvara as being synonyms (33.17) and declares in the Upaniṣadic style that the Higher Reality is auspicious, peaceful, beyond words and speech and denoted by the word *Om*, the *turīya* condition (35.30). Thus even Lord Śiva like Lord Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu teaches the Vedānta philosophy with phrases from the Śaṅkara Vedānta or Gauḍapāda Vedānta.

Via. Cantos 52-61 give the Arjunopākhyāna in which practically the whole of the BG. is recast in a manner so as to teach the V.R. philosophy. This point has been made out before. It is clear that Lord Kṛṣṇa is made to teach the Vedānta philosophy with its peculiar analogies and words. Thus even the Bhāgavata section is fitted in the V.R. thought.

These sections are a clear testimony to the fact that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is deliberately working over older material and using it in its service. This may perhaps point to its lateness in point of time as well. For the three popular theistic sects are brought together and are made to fit in one frame, that of the Vedānta of the Gauḍapāda type. It is significant to note that the other schools of the Vedānta like the Viśiṣṭādvaita etc. are not known and have not come in either for a refutation or criticism or working over; and this may, in a way, point to the provenance of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which appears to be a land where the Buddhistic thought and the three sects had access and thrived; but the other schools of Vedānta thriving at some distant place were little or not known. Considering the time that has been assigned to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as also the fact that Rāmānuja came quite close to it, it is clear that his doctrine which was young and had yet to win a place could not be regarded as important by our text.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

After a critical study of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa an attempt may now be made to answer some of the important and intricate problems connected with the work.

It has already been pointed out that the problems connected with the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa are more or less of the nature of the problems connected with the Mahābhārata. If the latter is to be called the Epic of the Bards, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa may with propriety be called the Epic of the Vedānta philosophers. Tiresome repetitions, stories and anecdotes illustrative of the doctrines are the characteristics of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. It is possible for us to point out the later and the earlier in the Mahābhārata and it is also possible to suggest the possible line of its development as has been done by Drs. Holtzmann, Hopkins, Dandekar and others. The accretions to the Mahābhārata are apparently clear to the critical eye. But the case with the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is not so easy for analysis. It is clear that we cannot think of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as a composite text written by one person and at one time, and that it is a text that has passed through three different stages. The Upaniṣadic text of Vasiṣṭha, then the Buddhistic Mokṣopāya and finally the Kāśmīrian Śaiva Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa are in all probability the phases through which the text has passed and has come to us in its present form. The very popular character of the text is obvious; for the work as it is, is not a work on philosophy proper in the usual style of such works but it is a popular work seeking to impress its views on the reader through sheer repetition, emphasis and popular stories illustrating its views. Recognised works like the Bhagavadgītā, Śivapujā, as well as the well known *ākhyānas* like those of Bali-Vīrocana, Prahlāda-Nārāyaṇa, Ikṣvāku Manu as well as popular stories like those of Indra-Ahalyā, the three *bālakas* are with an attitude of ease used in the service of its instruction.

Under these circumstances, it is difficult to speak of its date unless a reference is made to one of its phases. As a text of Vāsiṣṭha it would belong to a pre-Gauḍapāda period while as the Buddhistic Mokṣopāya it would belong to a much later period and as a Vedāntic text that has grown in considerable and intimate contact with the Kāśmīra Śaivism it would belong to a still later period, the twelfth century. It would appear here that the dates proposed for the two earlier phases are more or less indicated by the nature of the internal material in the text and by no means can one be very dogmatic about them. About the date of the text as it is before us, the last and the final phase, the matter is different; and it can be asserted that it cannot be earlier than the date proposed here, the twelfth century. As has been pointed out before, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa refers to so many philosophical and literary works; and almost in each and every case it is the borrower, the text that lifts. Its richly attractive Kālidāśian grace and beauty is the result of, not only a supremely gifted poetical genius but also of a thorough assimilation of all the recognised masters of Sanskrit poetical and philosophical literature. Thus it stands at the end of a great literature and appears to sum it up.

To the same conclusion point out other considerations. Where can the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa be placed in the line of the Vedānta works? The philosophy of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa can be very briefly stated to be this: The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa accepts Brahman identical with the *ātman* to be the basic and the only reality. The world has not been produced and its appearance is nothing but an illusion. Thus it does accept the *ajātivāda* and the *vivartavāda*. The *dṛṣṭāntas* with which it seeks to establish its views are of the type of the *vivartavāda*, the *raju-sarpa*, *śaśa-śṛṅga*, *vandhyāputra*, *jala-taraṅga*, *hema-kataka* and *mṛgatṛṣṇikā*. It develops the doctrine of the *jīvanmukta*. It accepts the importance of Knowledge—*jñāna*—as the power that saves a man but it also equally emphasises the performance of Action—*karman*. In this respect it is just teaching the views of the Bhagavadgītā. In a word, it may be said that it teaches *jñāna-karma-samuccaya*. Doctrine of *sannyāsa* as taught in the Upaniṣads or as found very strongly recommended in the Śāṅkara-Vedānta is not found in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.

With such views where can the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa be placed? To be sure, with the repeated references to the Upaniṣads and the

reverential references to the *śāstra* it is to be placed in the line of the Brahmanical texts, whatever may be the extent of the Buddhistic influence. Similarly it is to be regarded as being nearer to the Śaṅkara-Vedānta as opposed to the other schools of Vedānta known after Rāmānuja, Vallabha, Madhva, Nimbārka, Śrīkṛṣṇa and others. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa favours Advaita and that too of an absolute type, perhaps in a more uncompromising manner than the Śaṅkara Vedānta. This would be obvious not only from the teaching of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as given here, but also from the fact that it is in a way never tired of referring to and quoting from Gauḍapāda. With the clear acceptance of the *ajātivāda* and the rejection of the *kārya-kāraṇa* theory, this fact needs no further proof. It is in a way significant that the other schools of the Vedānta are apparently not known to the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa; and this can be explained by the circumstance that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa was written when these schools had not yet won popularity and were of a comparatively recent origin and had not spread beyond the borders of the lands of their origin; and secondly that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa itself was written and revised in a land to which these schools had no access and where the philosophical instruction of Nāgārjuna, Gauḍapāda and Śaivism had held the ground.

But can the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa be placed in the line of the Śaṅkara Vedānta in view of its teachings? Superficially read, it would appear that there is no harm in doing so. But there can be no greater mistake than this. No doubt that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa has its similarities with the Śaṅkara Vedānta; but it also has its differences of a really fundamental type; and these certainly ought to weigh with us when we regard the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as a work in the tradition of the Śaṅkara Vedānta. Thus for instance, the Śaṅkara Vedānta favours *sannyāsa* but the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa does not. A commentator of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa with the Śaṅkara school views would have to face the same difficulties which he would be facing while commenting on the Bhagavadgītā. Both these texts, the Bhagavadgītā and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa in an unmistakable manner advocate the combination of Knowledge and Action. The ideal they recommend is the same as that of the *sthitaprajña* and the *jīvanmukta*. This is precisely the reason why the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa very freely draws upon the Bhagavadgītā. Nor would the commentator be very

happy while commenting on the metaphysical portions of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. Interesting facts are revealed on a comparison of the refutation of the *viññānavāda* by Śaṅkara with the teachings of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. In the first place, it is clear that Śaṅkara, of course following Bādarāyaṇa, refuses to accept the complete similarity or identity between the Dream and the Universe on account of the dissimilarity—*vaidharmyāt*. Secondly, it appears on a critical study of the entire discussion that Śaṅkara accepts the existence of the external objects which are directly perceived in all our perceptions and that he is not prepared to go to the length of denying the existence of these objects in the manner of the *viññānavādins*. On both these very important problems the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa appears to agree with the Buddhistic views and not with the Śaṅkara-Vedānta. Thirdly, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa appears to hold the view that a combination of *jñāna* and *karman* is possible as the Bhagavadgītā had thought previously, but this a position which the Śaṅkara-Vedānta would not accept. Fourthly, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa view of the *mukṭi* is closely akin to the view of the *vaiśeṣikas*; for according to them the condition is not one of absolute delight as the Śaṅkara-Vedānta would think, but it is a condition in which the ideal of the characterless entity is realised. The word that is frequently used in this connection in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is *pāśānavat* which certainly would be very repugnant to Śaṅkara-Vedānta. Fifthly, Śaṅkara's Brahman and *māyā* have a relation between them which is described as *anirvacanīya*. But the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa Brahman and *spanda* are more real and are directly connected; for the *spanda* is the power of internal movement on account of which the manifold appearances come into existence. The doctrine of *spanda* shows the Śaiva influence on the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa thought and is an important point of difference between the Śaṅkara-Vedānta and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa thought. Sixthly, the Śaṅkara-Vedānta makes much of *sannyāsa*, lays especial emphasis on *nivṛtti* but the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa very frankly advocates *pravṛtti* and *pauṛuṣa*. In fact the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa appears to recommend the *vṛtti-sannyāsa* of the Bhagavadgītā which is a mental condition brought about by the rise of knowledge. With these very important differences, no doubt of a fundamental nature, it is difficult to say that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is a work teaching Vedānta of the Śaṅkara school. The *dr̥ṣṭāntas* with which the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is

replete are more or less responsible for the view that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa teaches the Śāṅkara Vedānta. The Śāṅkara-Vedānta and the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa are never tired of using the *vivarta dr̥ṣṭāntas* for explaining their metaphysics; and in doing so, they follow Nāgārjuna and Gauḍapāda rather than Bādarāyaṇa. The philosophical views of the early writers on Vedānta like Bādarāyaṇa and his predecessors like Kāśakṛtsna, Āṇḍulomi, Badari have been discussed by Drs. Belvalkar, Bhattacarya and others. But the analogies used by these writers are not before us; and we know only their views about certain important problems like the relation of soul and the Highest, or the condition of the soul after death etc. But from this rather scrappy information it would be hazardous to conclude that any one of them taught the *vivarta* doctrine. Bādarāyaṇa definitely did not. It is always the analogies, *dr̥ṣṭāntas*, that give a sure clue to such views in Indian philosophy and in the Vedānta in particular. As a matter of fact, none of these writers and thinkers appear to have followed the lead of Yājñavalkya as given in his famous discourse with Maitreyī in which he declares '*yatra hi dvaitamiva bhavati tatra itaraḥ itaraṃ paśyati*' etc. The Brahmanical philosophers—a term that includes all the very early philosophers from the Upaniṣadic times to Bādarāyaṇa—have been very reluctant to propound the idealism of the type of that of Nāgārjuna, Gauḍapāda or Śāṅkara or of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa type. In fact, if the Śāṅkara school is left out of consideration for a while as it is no doubt an effort to assimilate the Buddhist views, it will be easily and clearly seen that the orthodox Vedānta as taught in the other four schools of Rāmānuja, Vallabha, Nimbārka and Madhva could not in any way muster courage and embrace the idealism that was the legitimate conclusion of some of the Upaniṣadic utterances; and they continued to wriggle pathetically in the Dvaita or the Advaita positions making unsatisfactory compromises. But nevertheless they remained out and out and entirely Brahmanical. This is the reason why in none of these Vedānta writers, to whatever school he may belong, is to be found any *vivarta dr̥ṣṭānta*. The Ahi-kunḍala and Sūryaka *dr̥ṣṭāntas* of Bādarāyaṇa almost disappear in the Śāṅkara Vedānta. In taking over the *vivarta dr̥ṣṭāntas*, Gauḍapāda and Śāṅkara looked to sources not essentially Brahmanical, and succeeded in showing that these were the precise conclusions of the Upaniṣads; yet their Buddhist leanings and roots were clearly perceived by

these other rival Vedānta writers who therefore spared no occasion to criticise and ridicule Śaṅkara as '*antaḥpraviṣṭa-cora, mādhyamiksya aparāḥ avatāraḥ, mithyāvādin*' etc. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as it is seen, has not felt the need of softening its idealism and so the Buddhistic influence is clearly visible. The result is that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is a work on Brahmanical Vedānta but stands closer to Buddhism than the Śaṅkara Vedānta with its affinities unmasked. It is also noteworthy that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa knows all the Buddhistic schools but does not show any acquaintance with the other Vedānta schools. As has been already observed, this may be a significant pointer to its provenance, a land in the extreme north, Kāśmīra where since early times all the Buddhistic schools were known, but where the other Vedānta schools had no access. The Śaiva element in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa also has been already referred to and in the whole of ancient India there is no other province where such a fusion of Buddhistic Idealism, Upaniṣadic Absolutism and Theistic Śaivism could have taken place.

From all this it would appear clear that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is not a work on the Śaṅkara Vedānta but is a text of Vedānta of a peculiar type. But even then in point of time where is it to be placed? Is it pre-Śaṅkara or post-Śaṅkara? It has been already shown that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is acquainted not only with the doctrine of Śaṅkara but also with his major and minor works as well. The arguments of Dr. Atreya that certain words, peculiar to the Śaṅkara Vedānta, such as *adhyāsa*, *adhyāropa* are not seen in the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa etc. have no force in them. In fact the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is to be looked upon as a reaction against the doctrine of Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara accepting Idealism advocated *sannyāsa* more or less in the manner of Buddha. The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa wants to counteract this by accepting the Idealism, even of a more radical type and yet harmonising it with a more positive attitude towards life, by advocating the performance of action. Just as the Bhagavadgītā is the result of a reaction against the Buddhistic philosophy preceding it, in a similar manner the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa also is a reaction against the *sannyāsa* doctrine of Śaṅkara. It may be that logically the *mithyāvāda* and *sannyāsa* go together and the *jñāna-karma-samuccaya* is really incompatible with it; yet from the point of view of society, *lokasaṁgraha* and the *yajña-cakra-pravartana*, it is the only way to be recommended.

In the Bhagavadgītā the performance of the action is recommended for all, yet Śaṅkara tried to find out a way by observing that the instruction was only for the layman and not for the wise. No such position can be taken with the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as its teaching is very clear. When many men following the intellectual lead of Nāgārjuna or Śaṅkara accepted the negative attitude of *sannyāsa* at such a time, a few centuries after the appearance of the great Śaṅkara, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa must have been written with a view to counteracting this tide in favour of *sannyāsa*. Looked at in this light the contribution of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to the Vedānta thought, will appear to be immense and very important as well. The Upaniṣadic thinkers, the Buddhistic philosophers and the thinkers of Śaṅkara's type, all trying to solve the riddle of life and *karman*, had arrived at the same conclusion of embracing the *sannyāsa*; but it is the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa which for the first time tries to effect a very bold union of Idealism and Activism. The Bhagavadgītā did the same; but it was easy for the Bhagavadgītā to do this in view of its positive view of the world. The doctrine of *jñāna-karma-samuccaya* was being earnestly taught in Kāśmīra and Ānandavardhana actually named his commentary on the Bhagavadgītā as the *jñāna-karma-samuccaya*. Against this background it is perhaps easy to understand as to how the need must have been felt of harmonising the metaphysical doctrine of the day, the Idealism of Nāgārjuna and Śaṅkara type, with the ethical doctrine of the day, *jñāna-karma-samuccaya*. Thus not only the phrases and ideas with which the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is replete point to a post-Śaṅkara date but its very doctrine also leads to the same conclusion.

There is another pointer also. In the eventuality of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa being a pre-Śaṅkara work, it is very difficult to imagine as to why it has not influenced the Vedānta thought in any manner and why no writers of any note of the Śaṅkara-Vedānta line are seen to refer to, quote from, or in any way follow it. It is, on the other hand, a fact that it is the writers of a very late period like Prakāśānanda or Vijñānabhikṣu who are seen in some way as being under its influence. This is not merely the argument of silence. It is almost impossible for a work like the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa to have escaped the notice of almost all the early writers on Vedānta and then all of a sudden as it were, to have influenced the writers of a later period.

A study of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa as a literary text also leads

us to the same conclusion. It has already been shown as to how the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa many times quotes and draws upon and has subtle reminiscences of almost all the recognised masters of the classical literature. It is also conversant with the literary theories of *rasa*, *abhinaya* and *dhyāni*. No reader can deny the highly aesthetic value of the imagery and the poetry of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. All these various references and the peculiar diction go to show that the present Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is a text of the twelfth century, late in the Vedānta line.

Time and again, suggestions have been thrown in the foregoing discussion, about the provenance of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. It may now, therefore, be asserted that the text was produced in Kāśmīra. Firstly, it knows the texts and literature known to Kāśmīra as for instance the Bhagavadgītā text. Secondly, it shows intimacy with the philosophical and literary theories current in Kāśmīra, the *jñāna-karma-samuccaya*, Śaivism, *rasa*, Drama etc. Thirdly, the fusion of the various philosophical views reflects only the philosophical atmosphere of Kāśmīra; and fourthly, it has references to Kāśmīra in a manner rather intimate. All these considerations put together point out Kāśmīra as the home of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa where it has been, as it is now, produced.

Is a critical edition of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa possible? Time and again it has been said that the problems connected with the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa are more or less of the same nature as of those connected with the Mahābhārata. But so far as the question of a critical edition is concerned the two materially differ. The Mahābhārata textual criticism has become a science and it has been possible to arrive at a critical edition of the Epic. The wealth of manuscript material available for study and the interesting facts revealed by them have made such a study possible. With the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, however, the case is different. The manuscript material is scanty and is not likely to throw any light on the evolution of the text. Further the present Nirṇaya Sāgara text in two volumes appears to have a certain unified character about it. The same excessively poetical style is to be met with in all the six *prakaraṇas*. Similarly the same diction saturated with the Bhagavadgītā and Gauḍapāda is to be met with throughout. Finally, the same metaphysical and ethical views are taught with a remarkable consistency. The deliberate effort to make

the work a Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa are obvious from the very systematic arrangement of the Vairāgya *prakaraṇa* and also from the fact of the author's borrowing cantos from the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa. Thus, whatever may be the phases through which the text has passed, the text as it is now, is a homogeneous one and an attempt to have a critical edition of the same is not likely to give any satisfactory results.

Who wrote it ? Nothing can be said. However a suggestion can be hazarded. The third stanza of the very opening canto runs as

स्फुरन्ति सीकरा यस्मादानन्दस्याम्बरेऽवनौ ।

सर्वेषां जीवनं तस्मै ब्रह्मानन्दात्मने नमः ॥ I.1.3

Is it that the author is paying homage to his teacher after having saluted the Brahman and the *ātman* in the first two verses ? Again in the very last stanza of the work we have

ब्रह्मानन्दं परमसुखदं केवलं ज्ञानमूर्ति ।

द्वन्द्वातीतं गगनसदृशं तत्त्वमस्यादिलक्ष्यम् ॥

एकं नित्यं विमलमचलं सर्वधीसाक्षिभूतं ।

भावातीतं त्रिगुणरहितं श्रीवसिष्ठं नताः स्मः ॥ VIb.216.26

Is the author again while concluding his work saluting his teacher ? The word Brahmananda appears to have a *śleṣa* on it. If this guess has any possibility of truth in it, then it may be said that the author is a disciple of Brahmananda. But nothing is known about a Brahmananda in Kāśmīra.

To sum up then, the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa is a Brahmanical work on Vedānta, not of Śaṅkara-type but teaching the Buddhistic Idealism and Upaniṣadic Absolutism as its metaphysics and the *jñāna-karma-samuccaya* as its ethics, and was produced in Kāśmīra in the twelfth century A.D.

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